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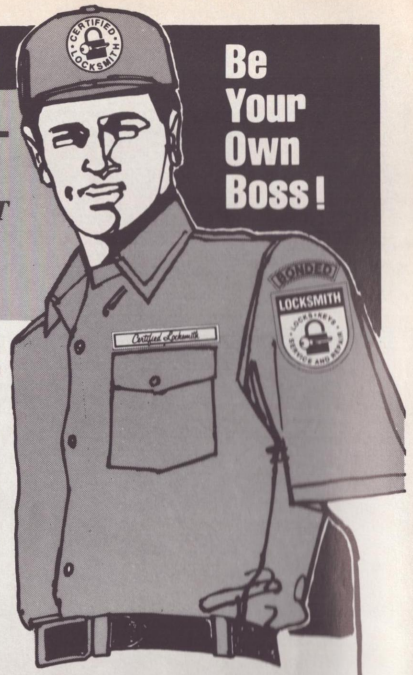

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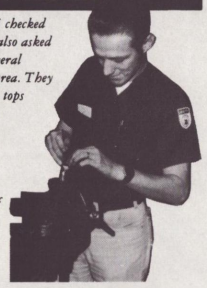

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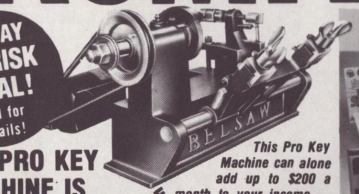

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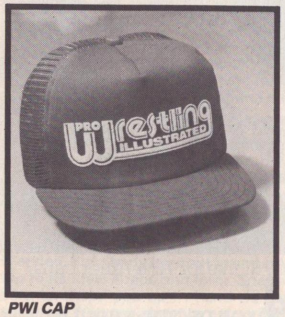

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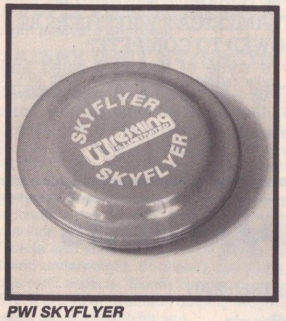

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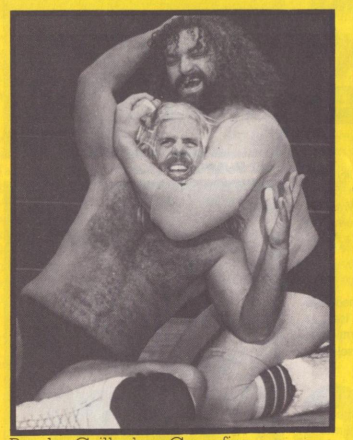

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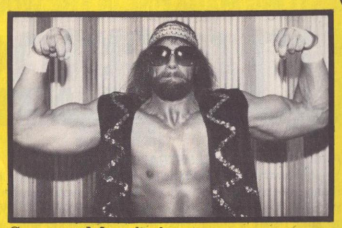

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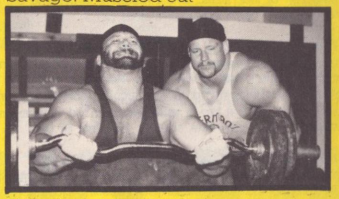
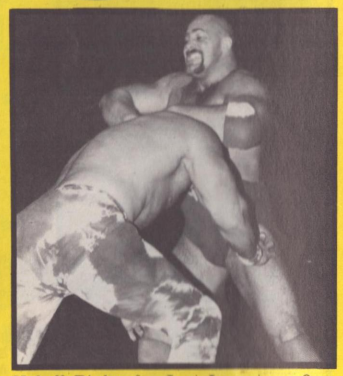


Warriors: Muscle up



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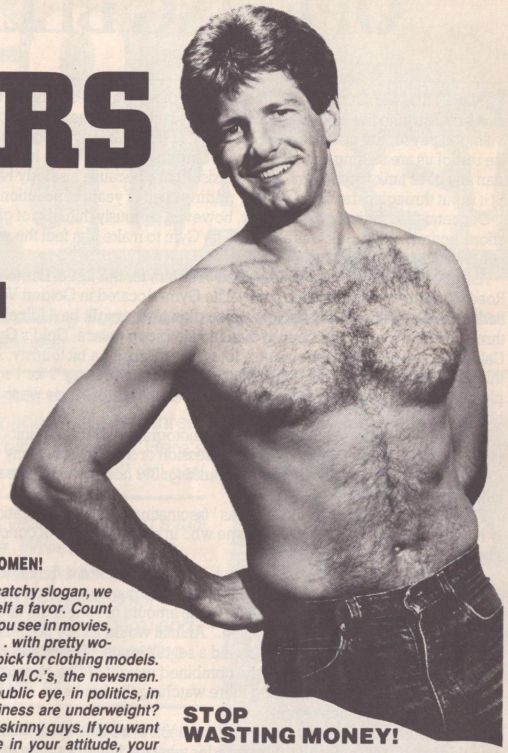
I TRIED FOR YEARS TO GAIN WEIGHT



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OPENING BELL

EDDIE ELLNER CONSIDERS himself something of a fitness fanatic. He works out at Jack LaLanne five times a week. He plays racketball whenever he can find somebody willing to pay for the court time. He eats a lot of green stringy things at lunch time when the rest of us are stuffing our mouths with burgers and fries. (Sure he takes more sick days than any of us junk food eaters, but he insists that's because his body has gone into shock as it is put through a transition period, ridding itself of years of pollution.)

Our semi-fit associate editor is now, however, seriously thinking of giving up his fitness efforts entirely. All it took was a day in The Gym to make him feel the way he does. Oh, not just a gym. The Gym.

Assigned to write a story on The Road Warriors for this issue, Ellner chose to attend a Road Warriors workout in their gym—The Gym—located in Golden Valley, Minnesota. "I had an idea of the kind of muscle museum this place might be," Ellner notes, "but it still threw me for a loop. I had been to the ultimate bicep palace, Gold's Gym in Santa Monica, California, and although they clang a lot of iron there, it's a bit touristy. At The Gym everything is business. There were no signs on the wall advertising '2 for 1 memberships.' People here are all business. They were not here to socialize. These were all serious students of weights."

The Road Warriors allowed Ellner and photographer Bill Apter into The Gym provided they did not question anyone during the session or intrude in any way whatsoever. For Ellner, that was no problem. "I stood around for 3½ hours in awe," he said. "I couldn't talk to anyone if I wanted to."

Ellner regards his visit to The Gym as "fascinating, exciting, educational—and extremely humbling, especially to a guy like me who in a rare moment of conceit might consider himself strong."

"These are dedicated lifters," he says. "They belong in a different universe than myself. I felt like a runt. As if I was a different species of human being. And there's no telling what they thought of Bill." Ellner was in awe of the amount of weight the lifters—particularly Hawk and Animal—were working with. "Animal would lift 950 pounds off the floor and hold it for about 30 seconds while he did a set of shrugs," Ellner said. "That's almost a half a ton, or 65 pounds less than than the combined weight of The Midnight Express and The Rock 'n' Roll Express. I'm standing there watching the bar bend, and I can't believe anybody can hold that much weight.

"After Animal finished his set, just for the heck of it I tried to lift the barbell. What a joke! I couldn't even roll it. It makes you wonder what the limits of a human body are."

Ellner admits being especially startled watching the workout of Ms. World, Joone Hopfenspirger. "Outlifting me is not a very big deal," he said. "But she lifts more than men twice my size! That kind of dedication is what separates professional athletes from the rest of us. That's why I make my living with pen, not a dumbell."

I phoned Hawk for some counsel that I might lend to Eddie, who's been in a slight funk since writing, "Hawk vs. Animal: Pushing Each Other To The Limit," (page 34). Hawk offered about as much sympathy as a Road Warrior could. "Ellner shouldn't get discouraged. Everybody is concerned only with getting the most of out their own bodies and trying to help others do the same. Nobody looks at Ellner—or even Apter—as a wimp. There is no macho bullcrap here. Check your ego at the door, or a guy like Animal will show you a thing or two that will knock you down a few pegs.

"If you work out, and you're serious, that's all it takes to fit in at The Gym. If Ellner is serious, he has nothing to be ashamed of. If he's embarrassed because others have progressed further than he has, he doesn't have the right attitude. Send him back and we'll work on him a little."

I don't think we'll be able to do that, Hawk. Right now we're having enough trouble convincing him to go back to Jack LaLanne. □

Stu Saks

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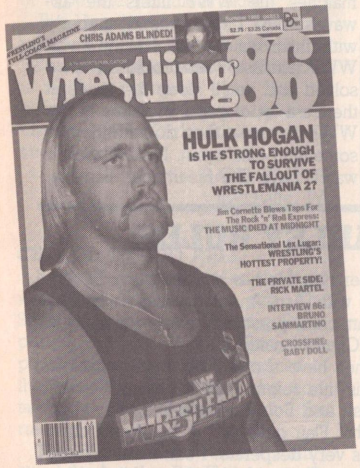
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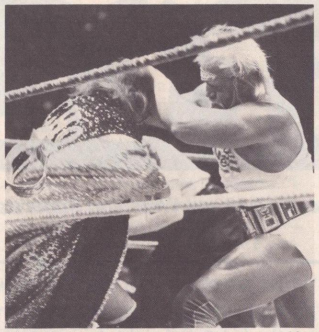
WWF: A CURE FOR INSOMNIA

I wish you would cut down on your coverage of the crummy WWF. That big geek Hulk Hogan is (dis)gracing one of your magazine's covers every time I turn around.

I don't understand what the attraction is with the WWF, anyway. Their champ couldn't wrestle his way out of a paper bag and their TV programs are boring with a capital "B." Hogan wins by brawling and breaking every rule in the book, and yet he's still the most popular wrestler, according to your ratings. I don't dispute the fact that the Hulkster is the most popular, but I'm just saying that he's not a wrestler in the strictest sense of the word.

People such as Bob Backlund were *wrestling* champions. Hogan is more like a street fighter. He is most definitely protected by the WWF from wrestling scientific grapplers like Tito Santana or Ricky Steamboat. Against talented guys like them, Hogan's brawling tactics would not be as effective and the mighty Hulk would likely be toppled from the throne. Of course, that's the last thing the WWF wants because "Hulkamania" rakes in big bucks and they want to keep Hogan on top as long as possible.



WWF World champion Hulk Hogan, attacking Randy Savage, does not deserve the media attention he has received, writes Dave Wathy.

Another thing: Are people supposed to be excited by the lousy matches the WWF litters the airwaves with? I recommend anybody with insomnia to watch any given WWF telecast. Your problem will be solved and you'll sleep fast. I admit there's a lot of good wrestlers in the WWF, but what they do with them is something else again. It's a shame to watch guys like Steamboat, Santana, JYD, and Orndorff get lost in the shuffle with no hope of getting a shot at Hogan.

I bet it won't be long before they get fed up and follow Barry Windham out of the nowhere zone of the WWF and back to the NWA or AWA, where they'll get a fair shake. The NWA knows that the fans are the lifeblood of the sport, and they react by giving us what we want: great wrestling action, without a lot of hype and ridiculous skits.

Ric Flair has his faults, but even people who hate him must admit that he's a superlative wrestler. Slick Ric is a "ring general," just like he claims to be, and I foresee him holding the NWA World title for a long time to come.

DAVE WATHY
Blairsville, PA

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, HARLEY RULES!

By Charles Russo

I just thought that I'd write and let you in on my feelings about today's professional wrestling.

Ted DiBiase. The thing that comes to mind with DiBiase is, how can he be a popular wrestler? I like DiBiase, but I think that he is a very bad person (if you can understand that contradiction). After all, he (along with Bob Roop) attacked Ron Garvin in a Georgia parking lot and broke his ribs. DiBiase also broke both of Bob Armstrong's cheekbones with his allegedly loaded glove. He has pointed to this incident with pride, even going so far as to put the words "Face Arranging By DiBiase" on the front of his shirt.

Along with Steve Williams, he created a reign of terror over the Mid-South region until he received a life-threatening injury at the hands of Dick Murdoch. All of a sudden, after four years of evil, he became equal to the Pope in popularity. How long will it last? My guess is, as soon as he leaves the Mid-South, he will revert to the Ted DiBiase that we have all grown accustomed to.

Ric Flair. I maintain that while Flair is one of the best wrestlers in history, he will lose his NWA title by the time 1987 rolls around, or by Easter 1987 at the latest.

Here's why. Flair lost the title to Harley Race in June, 1983, in St. Louis, where Flair is very much disliked. In November, 1983, he regained the title from Race in Greensboro, North Carolina, where Flair was immensely popular at the time. He lost it to Kerry Von Erich in May, 1984, in Texas, where Von Erichs are demigods, on David Von Erich Day.

He won it back from Von Erich in Japan, where wrestlers are cheered if they are good wrestlers, not good men. This little series of events leads me to believe that Ric Flair cannot operate without cheers. Now there is little reason to cheer him. He has broken Dusty Rhodes' ankle, teamed up with Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard, and sneak-attacked practically every threat to his title in the World Championship area.

His recent matches have shown flagrant disregard for the rules. While his title reigns thus far haven't exactly been Rick Martel-ish and Bob Backlund-like, they didn't leave any doubts that Flair deserved to be World champion. Today, Flair is very desperate. I can name a dozen men inching closer to Flair and his title, and it is just a matter of time before either Dusty Rhodes or Harley Race or Butch Reed or Terry Allen (I refuse to call him Magnum T.A.) or somebody else stalls Flair's Lear jet for good.

Hulk Hogan. Flex. Grimace. Shout. Brawl. Wrestle? Har-hardy-har-har! Play with dolls. Play with thumb-wrestlers. Watch cartoons. Commercialize in general. Flex more. Grimace more. Shout more. No more! World champ? Ho-hum.

Jesse Ventura. When Jesse started broadcasting, he was excellent. He received a lot of good publicity from your family of magazines. When Vince McMahon Jr. read this publicity, he told Jesse Ventura something along the lines of this: "Jesse, you have been making Gorilla Monsoon look like the horse's ass that he is. You are here to be a rulebreaker, not, I repeat, not a good commentator. Now cut out this intelligence and become the puppet that I hired you to be. What kind of a federation would I have if I couldn't manipulate my wrestlers?"

McMahon probably didn't use these exact words, but he definitely said something to that effect. Jesse is still brilliant and puts Monsoon, McMahon, Alfred Hays, and Gene Okerlund to shame, but he is not operating up to

(Continued on page 62)

CHANGE THE DQ RULE!

Recently, much has been made of wrestling's disqualification rule. The Summer '86 issue of *Wrestling 86* reported that the World Class area pulled out of the NWA because of the rule. The same issue also contained a "You Decide" about the rule.

The World Class area couldn't stand the fact that Ric Flair constantly saves his NWA title by disqualification. They say that their World Class title can now change hands on disqualifications and countouts. This gives World Class referees much more power than refs in other areas.

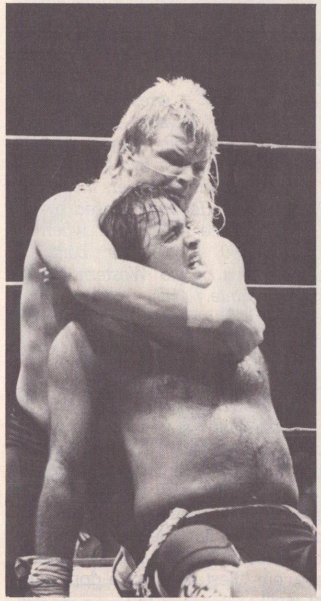
I can see why World Class officials feel this way. I can't stand the disqualification rule, either. However, I don't believe that abolishing the rule is the answer.

For example, on a recent Baltimore card that I attended, three of six matches ended in disqualification. If all of the disqualified men had been champions, three title changes would have occurred. If the rule was abolished, chaos might result. Titles might change hands every other night.

Also, most referees are very incompetent. Most don't seem to know what number comes after two. I don't think referees could handle the increased power that comes with abolishing the disqualification rule.

Instead of having titles change hands on DQ, I think all title matches should have a no-disqualification rule. This means all title matches would continue until one man is pinned, no matter how that pin is achieved. I know this would result in increased violence in title matches, but wrestling is a man's sport.

STEPHEN CARUSO
Columbia, MD



Bobby Eaton locks up Robert Gibson's chin. Lisa Cromer appreciated the *Wrestling 86* article describing the pressure champions feel.

ROCK 'N' ROLL 'N' MARTEL

I just had to write and thank you for the wonderful features in your Summer '86 issue. My favorite was "Jim Cornette Blows Taps For The Rock 'n' Roll Express: The Music Died At Midnight."

I thought it gave everyone a wonderful look at how much a pressure match affects the Rock 'n' Rollers. They are one of the best, if not the best team in the world. But your story showed that they still feel the pressure, just like everyone else.

My other favorite was "The Private Side: Rick Martel." It was truly wonderful to see that he has such a close family. He doesn't know how lucky he is.

The last thing I want to say is I really love *Wrestling 86* and all of your other magazines. I would like to see a "Private Side" feature on Barry Windham, as well as a feature story and color pinup of him in a future issue. Thank you and keep up the good work!

LISA CROMER
Blacksburg, VA

SAVE YOURSELF, BRUNO

I have been a wrestling fan for the past 30 years, and for the majority of these "The Living Legend" Bruno Sammartino has been my idol. So, it was with great pleasure that I read Bill Apter's "Interview 86" with Bruno Sammartino in the Summer '86 issue. The memories kept coming back to me: all those great matches in the old and new Garden and the crowd chanting "Bruno, Bruno, Bruno."

As an avid sports fan, my most treasured memories are those of Bruno Sammartino. Bruno came into the sport as a winner and exited as a winner. So, perhaps you can understand why I was so saddened and dismayed by his return to the ring.

It seems like the true champions of sport never know when to retire. Muhammad Ali had an amazing career, but was mentally affected by the time he left boxing. Babe Ruth, the greatest baseball player of all time, could barely swing a bat or run down to first base in the final stage of his career. As a result, he was unceremoniously tossed out of the sport, rejected by even the most hopeless teams. The list is endless. Now add Bruno.

Hopefully, Bruno will re-retire from wrestling before he is seriously injured. In the best of worlds, he will make this decision on his own. In the worst, the decision will be made for him and the "Living Legend" will have an indelible tarnish staining his brilliant career.

OCTAVIO DeMARCO
Flushing, NY

Gene Okerlund's son, Todd, is currently playing minor league hockey in the New York Islanders' organization. The 6-foot, 200-pounder could be considered a hockey "rulebreaker."

WWF PRESS CLIPS

We recently found two interesting snippets of WWF news in the magazines *Sports Illustrated* and *Sport*, though the articles had little to do with anything that goes on between the ropes.

● From the April 1986 issue of *Sport*, under the headline "And What's The Penalty For A Sleeperhold?":

Part of the success of the World Wrestling Federation stems from bringing in celebrities to trumpet the sport. There's the "rock 'n' wrestling connection" starring singer Cyndi Lauper as the manager of former champ Wendi Richter. Now there is a budding hockey and wrestling connection.

Whether it blooms will depend on the progress of 6-foot, 200-pound Todd Okerlund, who was drafted by the Islanders in 1982. The right wing has been averaging almost a point a game in his college career at the University of Minnesota. And if the name Okerlund sounds familiar, well, yes, he's the son of "Mean Gene" Okerlund, one of the voices of the WWF.

While Mean Gene, who sounds like Edward R. Murrow but looks like a Thurber cartoon, is anything but mean, his son is both mean and talented. "He plays hard every night and loves to mix it up," says Minnesota coach Doug Woog. Even the college media guide reads, "Sometimes Todd appears ready to break into 'the other sport.'"

Mean Gene, however, doesn't think his son's roughhouse style comes from hanging around the likes of Hulk Hogan and Jesse "The Body" Ventura. "Todd was a linebacker in high school. He went right from the gridiron to the ice, and it's the nature of the two sports to be physical."

Imagine the possibilities: Todd Okerlund of the Islanders versus Tiger Williams of the Kings in a steel cage match. As Mean Gene might say, "You ***won't*** *want to miss it."*

● From the April 14, 1986, edition of *Sports Illustrated*, this brief item from the weekly "Inside Baseball" column:

Professional wrestler Randy "Macho Man" Savage—managed by the lovely Elizabeth—played the outfield and caught for two years in the Cardinals' system under the name Randy Poffo. He was released by the Cards after the 1973 season when he batted .250 in 116 at bats for Orangeburg of the Western Carolinas League. His manager at Orangeburg was Jim Piersall, which may explain a few things.

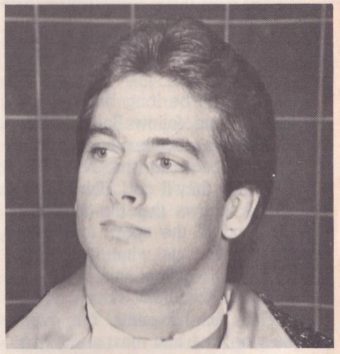
BEST BET UPDATE

The Fall 1986 issue of *Wrestling 86* that you hold in your hands marks the 12th edition of this magazine to hit the stands; our first was the Winter 1983 edition of *Wrestling 83*. It seems like a good time to look back on our "Best Bet" candidates and see how they've fared. All in all, as you'll see, our "Best Bets" have done pretty well!

● Brett Wayne Sawyer (Winter 1983) is now wrestling in the UWF area. At the time, his long-range goal was to capture the National heavyweight title; he did so on September 25, 1983.

● Angelo Mosca Jr. (Spring 1984) is wrestling sporadically in Canada. He has yet to achieve either his immediate goal (Missouri title) or his long-range goal (major tag title with father).

● Tommy Rogers (Summer 1984) was wrestling mainly singles matches when his goals were Les Thornton's Jr. heavyweight title and, in the long-range, to bulk up and face Ric Flair for the NWA World belt. Rogers is now one half of the successful team The Fantastics, who currently hold the UWF tag team title. As for the other half of that team . . .



Although Tommy Rogers did not attain his stated goals in the Summer 1984 "Best Bet," he did go on to form an extremely successful combination with the Fall 1984 "Best Bet," Bobby Fulton.

● Bobby Fulton's (Fall 1984) long-range goal was the same as Tommy Rogers' immediate goal: the NWA Jr. heavyweight belt. Maybe that was part of the impetus that brought the two men together to form The Fantastics!

● Nikita Koloff (Winter 1984) was looking for two things: the Mid-Atlantic title first, and then the NWA World title. That long-range goal remains as strong as ever for Nikita, but his immediate goal has been stepped up: Koloff seems only a match or two away from Magnum T.A.'s U.S. title.

● Keith Larsen (Spring 1985) was looking to gain revenge against The Koloffs for injuring his brother Don Kernodle, and later to team with Kernodle and win the NWA World tag team title. Following a hiatus from the sport of about a year, Larsen is back in the World Championship area, wrestling under the name Rocky Kernodle.

● Brutus Beefcake's (Summer 1985) immediate goal was to break into the WWF Top 10 ratings. That he's done. His long-range goal, though, seems longer than ever: to win the WWF World title from Hulk Hogan. Though he's gained a few WWF title matches with Hogan, it appears that the Hulkster's grasp on the belt is stronger than ever.

● Nord the Barbarian (Fall 1985) wanted to win the Mid-South tag team title with his partner Jake Roberts. They failed in that attempt. Nord's long-range goal, however, seems to be falling into place nicely for him: to hurt as many people as possible. He's doing exactly that in the AWA.

● Sam Houston (Winter 1985) did all right in his goals. Immediately, he wanted to gain revenge against Ole and Arn Anderson for breaking his arm; that he did. Long-range, Houston was looking to win a major singles title; that he did as well, capturing the Mid-Atlantic title (now held by Black Bart). Houston continues to wrestle in the World Championship area.

● Lady Maxine (Spring 1986) was looking to run Peggy Lee Pringle out of Florida, and she succeeded in that immediate goal. Maxine is currently in the UWF where, as Jack Victory's girlfriend, she's hardly fulfilling her long-range goal of adding respectability to women's wrestling.

● Kevin Kelly (Summer 1986) remains in the Central States area where he continues to work on his immediate goals: either the Missouri title or the Central States title.

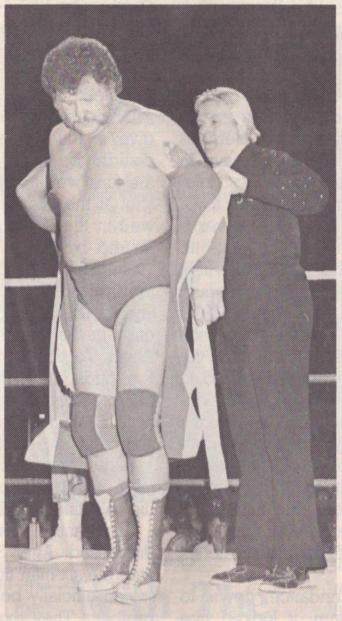
WFIA CONVENTION '86

The Wrestling Fans International Association (WFIA) has announced the selection of Houston as the site for their 1986 convention, to be held August 6 through August 9.

Special events planned for the convention include: a "ring event," which will allow WFIA members to actually step into a wrestling ring and receive some rudimentary instruction from wrestling school instructors who will be on hand; a video marathon where fans are invited to bring their own favorite wrestling videotape for other fans to see; a "Poolside Texas BBQ," where it will be possible to meet and talk with wrestlers who will be in attendance; a membership meeting and awards banquet, where over 40 awards will be presented; exhibits and displays of wrestling memorabilia, plus an auction and a raffle.

A UWF wrestling card is scheduled in Houston for the evening of August 8, and arrangements will be made with American Airlines to provide special rates from Houston to New Orleans for the August 9 card there.

Additional details can be obtained by contacting WFIA headquarters at P.O. Box 451, Freeport, Illinois 61032.



Bobby Heenan managed Harley Race briefly while Race was in the AWA several years back. The two have reunited in the WWF.

RANDOM NOTES

According to an article in the May 12, 1986, edition of New York's *Daily News*, professional wrestling experienced a 3.46 million increase in spectator attendance in 1985 (an estimated figure) as compared with 1984. That's the third largest increase, behind 3.69 million in auto racing (also estimated) and 4.87 million in baseball. The two biggest losers: pro football (down 1.82 million) and soccer (down an estimated 1.5 million) . . . **Harley Race** is now wrestling in the WWF under the management of **Bobby Heenan**; during his first televised match, taped in Toronto, chants of "boring" were *very* audible. It's a shame to see that happen to the legendary seven-time NWA World champ . . . **Dusty Rhodes** teamed with **The Road Warriors** in Baltimore to capture the NWA six-man title from **Ivan** and **Nikita Koloff** and **Baron Von Raschke** in a steel cage match when Dusty pinned Von Raschke. We wonder how one of the original holders of that title, **Krusher Khrushchev**, feels about the loss coming about as the result of his replacement in the team getting pinned! . . . It looks like the anticipated full-time reunion of **Barry Windham** and **Mike Rotundo** in the AWA has fallen to pieces. Rotundo is now teaming with Windham look-alike **Dan Spivey** in the WWF. Windham remains in the Florida area . . . **Lisa Sliwa**, wife of Guardian Angel leader **Curtis Sliwa**, recently made her WWF debut by defeating **Donna Christentello** with a sunset flip. The Guardian Angels are the controversial volunteer citizen's group that emphasizes self-defense tactics to fight crime. It will be interesting to see how those tactics work in the wrestling ring . . . **Todd Champion** is a newcomer in the World Championship area . . . Japanese legend **Antonio Inoki** (the subject of last issue's "Golden Moment") suffered his first pinfall loss in 12 years when he was defeated by **Andre the Giant** on April 25 in Kumamoto City Gym in Japan . . . Masked Mexican legend **El Solitario** died recently from a heart attack. He was 40 years old.

THE LAST WORD

Mr. Wrestling II, currently a rulebreaker in the Continental area after three decades of impeccable scientific excellence: "I'm the Pete Rose of wrestling, and I'm being treated like yesterday's garbage. Well, when I clean out the Continental area of all of *today's* garbage, and Ric Flair comes here to defend his title, he's going to be *forced* to wrestle me. And that will end the long years of neglect I've had to suffer at the hands of the NWA." □

IN THIS CORNER

By Dave Rosenbaum

IT'S WORLD CLASS MINUS THE CLASS

MY FIRST REACTION upon hearing the lineup for the third annual David Von Erich Memorial Parade Of Champions was, why would anybody pay $30 to see Missy Hyatt wrestle Sunshine? They could call it the "Ballet of the Valets" and the winner would be the World Class Valet champion. One question, though: Is there a valet belt?

But then, when I heard that this so-called wrestling match was to be held in a 12' x 12' box with four inches of mud, the anger swelled up inside of me. Perhaps Vince McMahon was the new promotional consultant to the World Class. Vince has used boxing matches, televised weddings, and celebrities ranging from Herb to G. Gordon Liddy to fill arenas, but never, absolutely never, a female mud wrestling match. Although, don't count it out.

Call it desperation, because somewhere along the line, World Class officials obviously realized that they would have a hard time filling the card—and filling seats—for its yearly extravaganza at Texas Stadium. So call in the vice squad. Come one, come all, see women degraded and the sport of wrestling stripped bare! Pay your money and, if you sit close enough, maybe you'll get to see some skin!

They should be ashamed of themselves. This year's Parade Of Champions was not exactly a quality production, certainly not up to the standard of excellence we've come to expect from this usually outstanding wrestling federation. Two years ago, at the very first Parade Of Champions, over 43,000 fans saw Kerry Von Erich win the NWA title from Ric Flair in one of the finest matches of the decade.

Look how far they've come. Attendance down to 24,121. And in a vast, open-air stadium, it looked like even less. Three wrestlers appeared twice on the card. A man who didn't wrestle ended up with a share of a title. A mud wrestling match between two valets.

Imagine going to a Las Vegas boxing card, plunking down 100 bucks for a ticket, and discovering that the featured fighter, say Michael Spinks, was to appear in two 15-rounders. Or going to a baseball doubleheader and watching Fernando Valenzuela pitch both games (although there is precedent: Wilbur Wood, ex-pitcher for the Chicago White Sox, once started both games of a twin bill. But he was a knuckleballer, a different breed entirely).

This situation often occurs in tennis, where John McEnroe might play five sets of singles in the afternoon, then walk over to a side court and play another three sets of doubles. But as grueling as tennis can be, McEnroe isn't getting hit, punched, and kicked by a 250-pound man.

The fans at Texas Stadium saw Bruiser Brody wrestle champion Rick Rude for the World Class title and then engage in a grueling barbed wire match against Terry Gordy. Gordy, of course, also appeared in the six-man title bout against the Von Erichs and Steve Simpson. Simpson, a newcomer to the World Class, substituted for Kevin Von Erich in that match and, earlier in the day, defeated Kabuki.

Obviously, it would have been impossible for Brody to give a 100 percent effort in both matches. It simply couldn't be done. If he split his effort over both matches, the fans were robbed and Brody, too, was denied a fair shot at the World Class title. Gordy, of course, wrestled well in the six-man title match, but was almost seriously injured by Brody.

Simpson is another case. Brody and Gordy knew that they were scheduled to wrestle twice on the same card and, presumably, prepared accordingly. Simpson learned early in the day that he would be replacing the injured Kevin Von Erich when the Von Erichs challenged The Freebirds for the World Class six-man title. He could not be expected to know proper self-pacing techniques at such a young age, so he went all out to defeat Kabuki earlier in the card.

Naturally, Simpson wasn't at full strength for the tag team match. His outstanding performance is a tribute to his vast talent and stamina.

Apparently, however, World Class officials weren't as impressed. After Simpson, Lance, and Kerry Von Erich won the six-man title, it was announced that Kevin's name would officially be listed as champion along with his two brothers. They explained that Kevin Von Erich was part of the team that signed the contract, and even though he didn't appear, was still entitled to a share of the title. This left Steve Simpson out in the cold.

The World Class' decision defies logic. Simpson wrestled, Kevin begged off. There is no parallel in any other sport. In tennis, if one member of a doubles team is injured, the match must be forfeited. There can be no substitutions. Perhaps this should be the rule in wrestling, but since Simpson was allowed to substitute, he deserved a share of the title.

The Parade was a charade. The World Class put its product on display, a watered-down version of its past self, and ended up with less than satisfactory results.

This year the World Class ended up with egg on its face. Or is that mud?

Dave Rosenbaum is Wrestling 86's newest associate editor.

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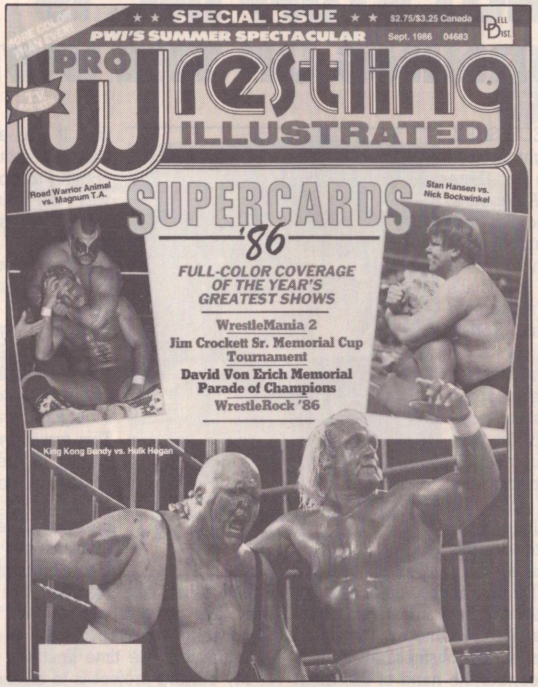
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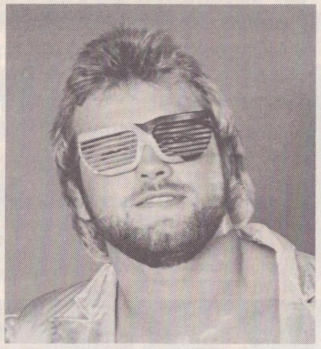
MANAGER'S FORUM

By Eddie Gilbert

EDDIE GILBERT: HOT STUFF INC. IS BURNING UP THE UWF

NO GREETINGS NECESSARY, folks. I'm gonna cut right through the crap and let all of you out there know that I do not hate Americans. My father was born in this country, my mother was born in this country, and I was born in this country. I'm an American through and through, but that's not gonna stop me from respecting the rights of the great Kortsia Korchenko.

Now, Mr. Korchenko told me that he drapes the flag over his beaten opponents because it symbolizes the power, strength, and greatness of the Russian people. It's a beautiful act. He handles the flag like he's picking up a baby and proudly lays it over the body of the unconscious slime. I respect Korchenko's rights to do this and will stand by him, no matter what.



Eddie Gilbert has officially announced his retirement from active wrestling to concentrate his efforts on managing Kortsia Korchenko and The Blade Runners—Hot Stuff Inc.

I understand, however, that Bill Watts, the cheating, underhanded president of the UWF, is upset because I allow my wrestler to do this. Well, let me say first of all that although I manage Korchenko's business affairs and provide guidance, I cannot control the mind of this great man, nor do I care to. And if he wants to lay the flag over someone's body, I'm gonna help him do it. Watts can't stop us, the referees can't stop us, and certainly, that so-called Dr. Death can't stop us.

You see, ladies and gentlemen, Korchenko is just one part of the most powerful group of wrestlers to ever take over the sport. "Hot Stuff Incorporated" will soon be the most devastating stable in all of wrestling. My Blade Runners, Rock and Sting, will be UWF tag team champions before this magazine reaches your hands. This is not a mere prediction. It's a statement of fact.

Hot Stuff Incorporated has the financial backing of one of the richest women in the world. Each day, I have scouts around the country checking out the most talented wrestlers and signing them to lucrative contracts. Before long, nearly every major title in the United States will be the property of Hot Stuff Inc. and I will be a rich man. As I said, this is not merely conjecture but a statement of fact.

Now, a lot of people have asked me what I was doing with Korchenko at ringside during the Crockett Cup in New Orleans, but I thought that was pretty obvious. We were seconding the Koloffs. See, what happened was this. It was a Friday night and I was hanging around my apartment with nothing to do when the phone rang. It was Ivan Koloff, and he said he heard that I was associated with his comrade Korchenko. He wanted to know whether I could get Korchenko to join them at ringside, and of course I said yes.

Let me say that it was the greatest reunion of all time. When Korchenko and the Koloffs first met in the dressing room, my blood turned a shade redder. I tell you, I was proud to be a part of it. This was only surpassed by what happened in the ring. The Koloffs were wrestling Terry Taylor and Steve Williams, and Dr. Death finally got what he deserved. The combination of the three Russians was too much for him to take. I truly thought he had breathed his last breath when they strangled him with the chain. The only way this moment could have become greater was if Korchenko had draped the flag over Williams' body, but, unfortunately, the time limit ran out.

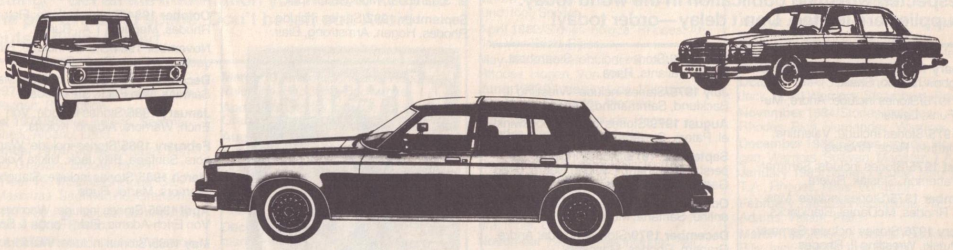
My current project is to arrange a match between The Blade Runners and The Fantastics, who by some fluke now hold the UWF tag team belts. I've been around a long time, but I have never seen a team so misnamed. Sting and Rock make Bobby Fulton and Tommy Rogers look like children. Fantastics? We'll see about that!

Sting and Rock are a little impatient for their title shot, and my toughest job as manager is to keep them from scaring Bobby and Tommy off before we can get their names on the dotted line. I assured Sting and Rock that once they had the belts, they would never lose them. And they agreed to be patient.

The team that really upsets me is The Freebirds. When word broke that the UWF signed The Freebirds to the richest contract in its history, my lady friend almost went through the roof. She couldn't believe that the UWF doesn't recognize the quality of The Blade Runners. There's no doubt in my mind that we should be the highest paid tag team in the world. So when we dispose of these guys, the UWF will have no choice but to better that contract.

Then we'll be the richest and the best and Hot Stuff Incorporated will rule professional wrestling. I've said it right here and you can take my words to the bank. □

OWN CARS & TRUCKS FOR $200 OR LESS



Did you know there is an incredible way you can own automobiles for $200 or less? That's right! $200, $150, even as low as $75.00. And it works for sports cars, luxury sedans, four-wheel-drives, pick-ups and vans.

It wasn't long ago that life really had me pinned down. I was unemployed and deeply in debt. Nothing it seemed would ever go right for me. In fact I had just failed at another business attempt. That was like the final straw. I was miserable, depressed and had lost every ounce of my self confidence.

Then like a lightening bolt from the sky, I discovered something fantastic, something unbelieveable. **A special way to own automobiles for $200 or even less!**

Don't ask me why this happened to me, because I really don't know. All I know is it came to me when I needed it most, and I didn't question it. I was so excited all I really could think about was trying it out.

So I scraped together the money and tried it. Bingo! It worked even better than I ever expected. Fact is, it worked so good I have already used it five times to own four cars and one truck, two of which only cost $100 each. What's more, I plan on using this secret for the rest of my life to own dozens more.

Well, you might be thinking I should use this special knowledge to set up some car lots and make a load of money. I did consider that. But to be honest, I really don't want the headaches of running a full scale business. However, I would like to profit some from my discovery. So I wrote down my secret and had it printed.

I am offering it to you for just 10 dollars. I figure that I can sell enough to pay off some bills, take a vacation, and put a down payment on a house for my family. In return you will learn something incredible - **a way to own automobiles for $200 or less.**

Imagine what you can do with all the money you save. You could buy boats, take exciting vacations, or even put in a swimming pool.

My method is simple and absolutely legal. It won't require you to do anything dishonest or have any special skills. It **does not** involve:

- leasing
- government surplus
- government sales
- auctions
- repossessions
- tax write offs
- sweepstakes
- or gambling

I am happy to say, my method can work for practically anyone who can legally own and operate a motor vehicle - teachers, factory workers, housewifes, students, professionals, self-employed, unemployed and the list goes on and on.

I realize this whole concept may still sound too good to be true. The truth is if I were in your shoes I would be skeptical too! So I have included some **testimonials** from people who have already read and used my information:

- *James, your secret is incredible! I used it to own a fantastic truck for less than $85. I wish I had known about this years ago. Charles M., Florida.*
- *James, I admit I was skeptical at first, but this method really does work for women. It is truly the poor person's way to own fancy cars. Cindy D., Atlanta, Georgia.*
- *Ten dollars is a very small price to pay for this super information. Way to go James! You have made it possible for me to own those beautiful cars I used to only dream about. B.T., West Virginia.*

STOP WASTING MONEY! LEARN THE POOR MAN'S WAY TO OWN FANCY CARS!

One final word. I believe in being completely honest. So I must tell you there is one drawback. My information **does not** describe a get rich quick scheme. It is not intended for that purpose. It is meant only to provide you with ultra low cost automobiles for your personal use. So don't order my information to get rich. Order it so you can own gorgeous cars for less than you ever imagined. You won't be a millionare, but you can sure look and feel like one.

My method really works. I know that to be a fact. But I don't want you to take my word for it. So I am offering a FULL & UNCONDITIONAL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE. Examine my secret in the privacy of your home. If for any reason you are not totally satisfied, just return it for a full refund. No questions asked!

Special Notice: Copies of my information are limited. They are available strictly on a first come, first serve basis. Order yours now so you don't have to wait another day to start enjoying these cars.

To order:

1) Print your name and complete address on the coupon below.
2) Include $10 plus $1.50 shipping and handling (Florida residents add 50 cents sales tax) and make check or money order payable to Cars & Trucks. Or use VISA or Mastercard. Just fill in the appropriate information on the coupon. Be sure to sign where indicated.
3) Mail to Cars & Trucks, Post Office Box 6930, Tallahassee, FL 32314

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Yes, I want to learn your secret to owning cars for $200 or **LESS!** Enclosed is $10 plus $1.50 shipping and handling. (Florida residents please include 50 cents sales tax) If I am not totally satisfied, I can return it for a FULL REFUND!

BACK ISSUES OF

VICTORY SPORTS SERIES

THE Wrestler

Don't miss a single issue of the magazine that has thrilled wrestling fans for two generations, THE WRESTLER. Complete your collection of the most respected wrestling publication in the world today. Supplies are limited. Don't delay—order today!

February 1975/Stories include: Andre, Strongbow, Brisco, Sheik,

June 1975/Stories include: Andre, Muraco, Funk, Lawler.

July 1975/Stories include: Valentine, Sammartino, Race, Rhodes.

August 1975/Stories include: Sammartino, Patterson, Stasiak, Rivera.

December 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, McDaniel, Blackjacks.

January 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Putski, Wrestling II, Rhodes.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Sammartino, Rhodes, Valentine.

July 1976/Stories include: Andre, Wrestling II, Inoki, Von Erich.

November 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Valentine, Mosca.

December 1976/Stories include: Von Erich, Mulligan, Brody, Funk.

January 1977/Stories include: Brody, Andre, Wrestling II, Mascaras.

February 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Jones, Funk, Von Raschke.

April 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Funk, Flair, Bockwinkel.

May 1977/Stories include: Mascaras, Valiants, Andersons, Sammartino.

June 1977/Stories include: Patera, Putski, Hernandez, McDaniel.

July 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Rocca, Mascaras.

October 1977/Stories include: Rhodes, Sammartino, Flair, Snuka.

November 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Slater, Mascaras, Snuka.

September 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Grahams, Andre, Mascaras.

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Backlund, McDaniel, Race.

November 1978/Stories include: Flair, Andre, Ladd, Graham.

December 1978/Stories include: Brisco, Mulligan, Andre, Blanchard.

February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

July 1979/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Sammartino, Andre.

August 1979/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Patera, Stevens, Superstar.

September 1979/Stories include: Superstar Gramham, Cyclone Negro, Greg Gagne, Mil Mascaras.

October 1979/Stories include: Flair, Valentine, Santana, Muraco.

December 1979/Stories include: Andre, Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras.

January 1980/Stories include: Race, Backlund, Snuka, Brisco.

February 1980/Stories include: Andre, Flair, DiBiase, Superstar.

March 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Andre.

April 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, DiBiase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

May 1980/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Bockwinkel, Patera.

June 1980/Stories include: Backlund, Abdullah, Brisco, Flair.

August 1980/Stories include: Valentine, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Albano.

September 1980/Stories include: Ladd, Patera, Steamboat, Gagne.

October 1980/Stories include: Patera, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Morales.

November 1980/Stories include: Rich, Hogan, Snuka, Super Destroyers.

January 1981/Stories include: Valentine, Rhodes, Patera, Von Erich.

February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoans, Blassie, Wrestling II.

May 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, DiBiase, Moondogs.

June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

December 1981/Stories include: Rhodes, Steele, Race, Hogan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.

March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

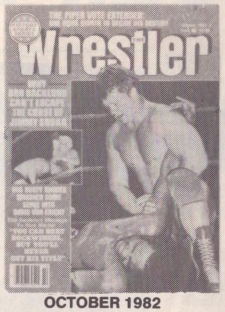
May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.



OCTOBER 1982

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

March 1983/Stories include: Piper, Reed, Valiant, Roberts.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.

May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/Stories include: 20th Anniversary, 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen

March 1986/Stories include: Lance Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen vs. Martel

April 1986/Stories include: Kevin Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

May 1986/Stories include: Larry Zbyszko, Von Erich Family, Santana-Ventura, The Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lex Lugar, Gino Hernandez, Flair vs. Bockwinkel, Hulk Hogan, Magnum T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair

THE WRESTLER

☐ FEB 75	☐ DEC 78	☐ JUNE 81	☐ JUNE 83	☐ APR 85
☐ JUNE 75	☐ FEB 79	☐ JULY 81	☐ JULY 83	☐ MAY 85
☐ JULY 75	☐ MAY 79	☐ AUG 81	☐ AUG 83	☐ JUNE 85
☐ AUG 75	☐ JULY 79	☐ OCT 81	☐ SEPT 83	☐ JULY 85
☐ DEC 75	☐ AUG 79	☐ DEC 81	☐ OCT 83	☐ AUG 85
☐ JAN 76	☐ OCT 79	☐ JAN 82	☐ NOV 83	☐ SEPT 85
☐ FEB 76	☐ DEC 79	☐ MAR 82	☐ DEC 83	☐ OCT 85
☐ JULY 76	☐ JAN 80	☐ APR 82	☐ JAN 84	☐ NOV 85
☐ NOV 76	☐ FEB 80	☐ MAY 82	☐ MAR 84	☐ DEC 85
☐ DEC 76	☐ MAR 80	☐ JUNE 82	☐ APR 84	☐ JAN 86
☐ JAN 77	☐ APR 80	☐ JULY 82	☐ MAY 84	☐ FEB 86
☐ FEB 77	☐ MAY 80	☐ AUG 82	☐ JUNE 84	☐ MAR 86
☐ APR 77	☐ JUNE 80	☐ SEPT 82	☐ JULY 84	☐ APR 86
☐ MAY 77	☐ AUG 80	☐ OCT 82	☐ AUG 84	☐ MAY 86
☐ JUNE 77	☐ SEPT 80	☐ NOV 82	☐ SEPT 84	☐ JUNE 86
☐ JULY 77	☐ OCT 80	☐ DEC 82	☐ OCT 84	☐ JULY 86
☐ OCT 77	☐ NOV 80	☐ JAN 83	☐ NOV 84	
☐ NOV 77	☐ JAN 81	☐ FEB 83	☐ DEC 84	
☐ SEPT 78	☐ FEB 81	☐ MAR 83	☐ JAN 85	
☐ OCT 78	☐ MAR 81	☐ APR 83	☐ FEB 85	
☐ NOV 78	☐ MAY 81	☐ MAY 83	☐ MAR 85	

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VICTORY SPORTS SERIES

Inside Wrestling

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July 1974/Stories include: Garea, Zbyszko, Heenan, Strongbow.

August 1974/Stories include: Sammartino, Sheik, Albano, Ladd.

September 1974/Stories include: Sammartino, Graham, Brooks, Bruiser.

November 1974/Stories include: Garvins, Mascaras, Sammartino, Graham.

June 1975/Stories include: Sammartino, Abdullah, LeDuc, Brisco.

August 1975/Stories include: Valentine, Garea, Rhodes, Sammartino.

September 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Funk, Valiants, Gagne.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Strongbow, Lewin, Brazil.

March 1976/Stories include: Ladd, Funk, Sheik, Robinson.

April 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Albano, Flair, Brisco.

June 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Bockwinkel, Flair, Mascaras.

August 1976/Stories include: Funks, Mascaras, Sammartino, Putski.

September 1976/Stories include: Andre, Funk, Hansen, Mascaras.

October 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Race, Johnson, Jones.

November 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Wrestling II, Funk, Sammartino.

December 1976/Stories include: Stasiak, Rhodes, Bockwinkel, Orton.

January 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Brisco, Funk, Gagne.

February 1977/Stories include: Andre, Funk, Sammartino, Gagne.

May 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Putski, Sheik, Race.

August 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Mascaras, Lawler.

September 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Mascaras, Brisco.

October 1977/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes, Backlund, Mulligan.

November 1977/Stories include: Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras, Gagne.

December 1977/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Johnson, Maivia.

March 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Valentine, Backlund, Bockwinkel.

April 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Steamboat, Bruiser.

August 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Andre, Hansen.

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Rhodes, McDaniel.

November 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Backlund, Flair, Steamboat.

December 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Bravo.

January 1979/Stories include: Sammartino, Mulligan, Rhodes, Backlund.

February 1979/Stories include: Race, Sammartino, Steamboat, Ladd.

April 1979/Stories include: Andre, Flair, Backlund, Jones.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Rhodes, Backlund, Heenan.

June 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Superstar, Bockwinkel, Backlund.

July 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Ladd, Valiant, Brower.

August 1979/Stories include: Flair, Garvin, Race, Sammartino.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Mascaras, Strongbow, Garvin.

October 1979/Stories include: Rich, Rhodes, Backlund, Putski.

November 1979/Stories include: Snuka, Heenan, Race, Backlund.

February 1980/Stories include: Patera, Snuka, Santana, Albano.

March 1980/Stories include: Flair, Rich, Funk, Duncum.

April 1980/Stories include: Hogan, Rich, Backlund, Mascaras.

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Bockwinkel.

June 1980/Stories include: Putski, Andre, Hernandez, Keirn.

July 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, Von Erich, Superstar, Blassie.

August 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Wrestling II, Baker, Koloff.

September 1980/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, Ladd, Iron Sheik.

November 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, Putski, Bockwinkel, Koloff.

January 1981/Stories include: Race, Snuka, Morales, Slater.

February 1981/Stories include: Backlund, DiBiase, Bravo, Anderson.

April 1981/Stories include: Albano, Sammartino Jr., Race, McGraw.

May 1981/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Von Erich, Backlund, Santana.

June 1981/Stories include: Rhodes, Hansen, Piper, Gagne.

September 1981/Stories include: Patera, Koloff, Khan, Junkyard Dog.

January 1982/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Race, Humperdink.

February 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Flair, Steamboat, Rhodes.

March 1982/Stories include: Rich, Backlund, Idol, Spoiler.

April 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Andre, Von Erich, Piper.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.

June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales.

July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.

August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.

September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.

April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.

October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.

November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.

December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.

February 1984/Stories include: Abdullah, Sawyers, Valiant, Von Erich.

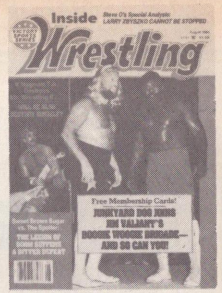
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.

May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.

June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.

July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.



AUGUST 1984

August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.

September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.

October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.

November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.

January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.

May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.

June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.

July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.

August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.

September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.

November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.

December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.

January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.

February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors vs. Russians, Hillbilly Jim, Rude, Lawler.

April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts

May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.

June 1986/Stories include: British Bulldogs, Windham-Ric Flair, Lance Von Erich, Blanchard.

July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, Magnum T.A.

INSIDE WRESTLING

☐ JULY 74	☐ DEC 77	☐ AUG 80	☐ APR 83	☐ APR 85
☐ AUG 74	☐ FEB 78	☐ SEPT 80	☐ MAY 83	☐ MAY 85
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CROSSFIRE

BRUISER BRODY

Almost everyone in the sport of wrestling has deep respect for Senior Editor Bill Apter. Associate Editor Eddie Ellner is an exception. He doesn't care for Apter or his views on professional wrestling. Each issue, these two editors will grill a wrestler about hot issues in his career, catching the grappler in the CROSSFIRE! The unedited transcript follows

EDDIE ELLNER: *Willya look at all the hair Bruiser Brody has, Bill. You wonder sometimes why life is so unfair—how Brody can have so much hair and you so little.*

BILL APTER: If hair made the man, where would Telly Savalas be? Joe Garagiola? Phil Silvers? Dwight Eisenhower?

BRUSER BRODY: ***Aaarggh!*** **I liked Ike. My favorite president. He loved to kick butt. Only man I would have voted for besides Teddy Roosevelt.**

EE: *You would have voted for him, provided you stayed in one place long enough to register. Will there ever be a time when Bruiser Brody settles down in one spot?*

BB: Oh, sure I'll settle down. ***After the preacher reads the eulogy and they start shoveling dirt on my box.*** **Then I'll have plenty of time to settle down. I'll have all the time in the world.**

BA: No chance you taking a cue from your friend Stan Hansen? A wife and nine kids seems to have settled him a bit.

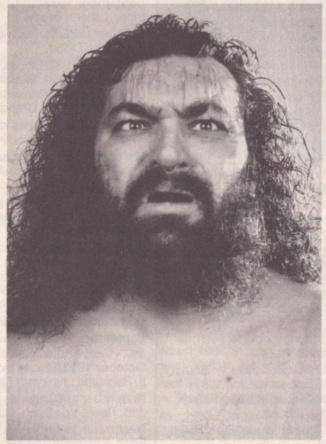
BB: Are you kidding me? Hansen is on the road as much as I am! That's what a wife and nine kids'll do to you. Hansen is home for five minutes and he gets nervous. Uh-uh. Family is the hangman's noose. Over the years it gets tighter and tighter. I said bye-bye to all that long ago.

BA: What is that supposed to mean?

BB: I'm cut differently than most people.

EE: *Well, Bill's a 36 squat. I go a 40 long. I'd say you were, jeez, a 46. Maybe even a 48.*

BA: That's not what he means smart guy.



The ubiquitous Bruiser Brody is a wrestler who cannot be classified by conventional labels. He is one of a kind, and for that his opponents can be grateful.

BB: Some are inspired by the tides of the ocean and the shadow of the moon. Others pursue fame and fortune for its own sake. My biological ticker ran amok years ago. ***I don't know what motivates me.*** **Sometimes I scare myself.**

BA: The book on you is that money *is* your motivating force. Is this not so?

BB: ***Ahhrgh,*** **money! Money is freedom, that's why I crave it so much. In this day and age you need it to pursue real interests. In and of itself money has no interest to me. But I need its purchasing power. I need its freedom.**

EE: *Not many people are aware that you are actually a college graduate. Why do you keep that a secret?*

BB: I have no secrets. My image, however, assumes a certain background. ***Jungle Boy. Raised by wild cheetahs in the Borneo muck. Impossible to control.*** **Well, they're right about the last part. If word got out that I possess several advanced degrees, people would become nervous. Because I** ***am*** **a madman. But I am a brilliant madman. I was always involved in independent studies in school. The other students feared for their lives. At times I would rage so violently that, well, I would rather not talk about it, actually. Part of my probation is based upon my silence.**

BA: Are you happy with your public image? Would you prefer to be left alone somewhere, away from the rest of the world?

BB: How terribly you misjudge me, Apter. The world is my stage. I am at my best in public rage, practicing my brutal magic on opponents in front of thousands and thousands of fans. The paradox is that I loathe the fans yet love the glory, crave the attention.

EE: *What's behind your fascination with Japan? Some critics feel that if you spent more time in the United States, you could win any title you chose. What is it that makes you return time and again to the Land of the Rising Sun?*

BB: I love Japan. For one thing, I'm paid a king's ransom to wrestle there. The little Japanese are awed by my presence. I bring out the beast in the usually levelheaded and indomitable people. I am the ultimate barbarian, a human nuclear bomb. I'm bigger than Godzilla. I let go when I'm in Japan. I release all the violent evil from within.

(Continued on page 58)

"If I have to take a man out of the ring to the floor, if I have to hit him with a chair, if I have to hit him with a chain or a 2x4—I don't care. I'm a winner, I do what I have to do to win. That's the bottom line."

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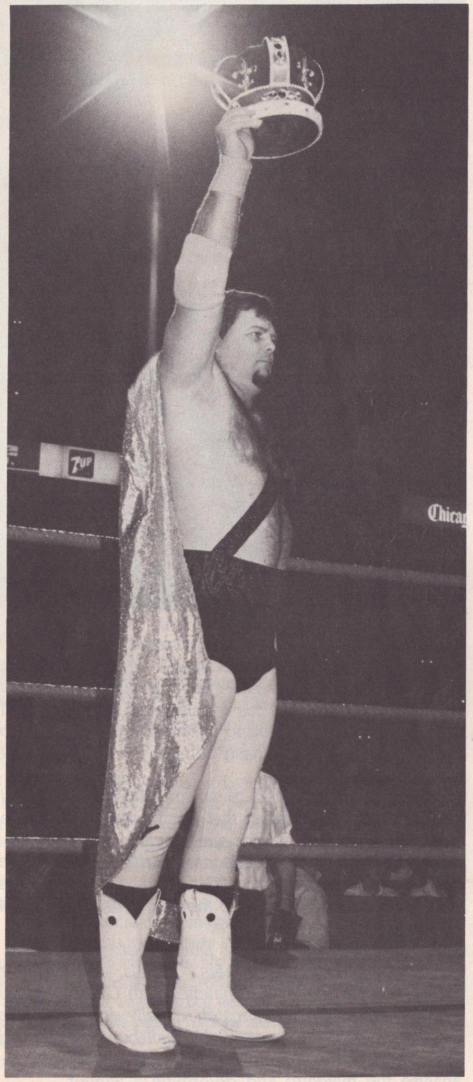
SCOUTING REPORT

Avid wrestling fans, like the wrestlers themselves, keep close tabs on the career progress of their favorite stars. As a service to our readers, *Wrestling 86* invites you to clip this page, save it, and compare this issue's "Scouting Report" with those of future featured wrestlers



JERRY LAWLER

SPEED: Lawler is not as fast as he appears. He is like a tortoise, relentless and methodical, and wears his opponents down rather than blinding them with quickness. He cannot rely soley on his speed to maneuver his opponent into position for his dreaded piledriver; he must weaken him instead with an assortment of preliminary moves. His low center of gravity contributes to the illusion of speed. **C+**

STRENGTH: Compared to most wrestlers, Lawler is small (six-feet, 234 pounds), and engages in little bodybuilding or weight training. He is not strong in a conventional, wrestling-muscular sense. Lawler relies on his experience and an ability to concentrate all his weight into a maneuver, thus maximizing his power. As the current rage in wrestling is toward the muscular giant, Lawler might yet be forced into the weight room to bulk up. **B–**

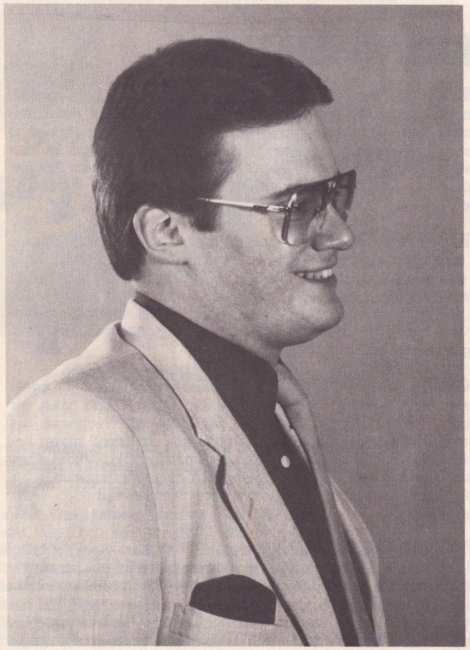
TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: Lawler has few peers in the sweet science. His piledriver is generally regarded as the sport's finest; his fistdrop is another finishing maneuver *par excellence*. Technique has elevated Lawler to the pinnacle of his profession. Traditional moves become subtle weapons full of dangerous and unpredictable nuances when applied by the King. And as the years wear on, Lawler appears to be getting better and wiser, his moves more complex and indefensible. **A**

PHYSICAL CONDITION: The years—16 of them—have not been kind to Lawler. A decade and a half of consistent punishment against men 50 to 100 pounds heavier has eroded his finely-tuned body. Lawler required an entire year to recover from a broken leg in 1980, and his body's capacity to heal itself remains questionable. He is never completely pain-free anymore. Lawler has demonstrated tremendous courage and grit, but the accumulated aches and injuries must affect his concentration. **B–**

RING INTELLIGENCE: If there is a way to win, rest assured Jerry Lawler will discover it. Lawler is both tactician and psychologist. Experience has taught him the value of talking a good game, of out-psyching his opposition before he can outwrestle them. He exploits the wild popularity he enjoys with the fans to his greatest advantage, drawing strength and power from their support. Lawler will always take advantage of his opponent's weaknesses, never allowing an opponent's flaw to remain unexposed. His strategies have translated into many languages and are regularly studied in wrestling schools throughout the world. **A+**

OVERALL GRADE: Lawler suffered emotional problems stemming from the outrageous promise he made to Memphis fans of capturing either the NWA or AWA title by the end of 1985. As the year passed and Lawler remained without a belt, he became reclusive, embittered, and turned to drinking. Being forced out of Memphis after dropping a loser-leave-town match to Bill Dundee, however, could have been what he needed to get his career back on the right track. When the fans begged for Lawler's reinstatement, and promoter Eddie Marlin complied, Lawler found renewed confidence and quickly captured the Mid-Southern title. Having learned that setting a timetable for winning a world title puts more pressure on himself than it does the champion, he might have more success with his quest in the future. **B–**

JIM CORNETTE VS. BABY DOLL



Who could ever have anticipated that professional wrestling's most vitriolic feud would involve two non-wrestlers—a manager and a valet?

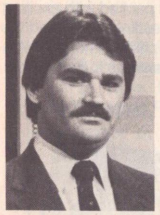
But the hatred between Jim Cornette and Baby Doll is indeed more intense than any you're likely to find anywhere else in the sport. Cornette not only despises Baby Doll's role alongside Dusty Rhodes, he is vehemently against her—or ***any*** *woman, so he says—standing at ringside during a match. The wrestling ring, according to Cornette, is no place for a woman.*

Verbal assertions of that view are one thing; physical attacks are something else again. After one of The Midnight Express' victories, Cornette grabbed the ring announcer's microphone and began insulting Rhodes and Baby Doll, who came to the ring to answer Cornette's verbal abuse.

When Dusty stepped into the ring to speak with Cornette, he found himself triple-teamed. Baby Doll ran into the ring and jumped Bobby Eaton from behind. Eaton elbowed Baby Doll, knocking her to the mat. After Cornette hit Rhodes in the head with his tennis racket, Dennis Condrey held a groggy Rhodes' head up so he could see one of the most horrible attacks in wrestling history: While Eaton held Baby Doll's arms behind her, Cornette jammed the handle of his tennis racket into her abdomen. Baby Doll crumpled to the mat, and Cornette, Condrey, and Eaton beat a hasty retreat to the safety of their dressing room.

Baby Doll was rushed to an area hospital where, for several hours, she feared that her internal injuries were severe to the point where she would never be able to have children. Doctors soon provided good news about her physical condition, but those hours of intense fear only served as added fuel to the fiery hatred of Cornette that was blazing away inside.

As we go to press, Baby Doll (6-feet, 195 pounds) is pressing NWA commissioners, officials, and promoters for a series of one-on-one matches with Cornette (6'1½", 173). Whether or not this match actually does take place, the prospect of a Cornette-Baby Doll bout proved to be fascinating to us—and to the four experts we asked to analyze the matchup and determine a winner.



TONY SCHIAVONE

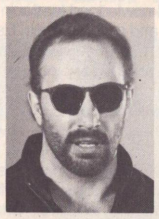
Every time I had to make an introduction on TV for that piece of videotape where Cornette and the Express attacked Baby Doll, I felt a sick churning in my stomach.

Let me place this matchup in perspective. Take Cornette first. He stepped into the ring in the World Class area, where he wrestled Sunshine, and again in the Mid-Southern area, where he was involved in handicap matches against Jerry Lawler. So Cornette is no stranger to the ring, he's just one of the stranger people to have stepped into that ring.

As for Baby Doll, I know that both of her parents were accomplished wrestlers themselves, and presumably they've passed a good deal of their knowledge and ring smarts down to their daughter. I can only assume that Dusty is coaching her as well.

I think if it ever reached the point where these two actually had a match, rather than a shouting spree or something where everybody ran into the ring battle royal style—and that's a distinct possibility considering how high emotions are running—I think that Baby Doll would win. Cornette is too emotionally frail, too excitable, too lacking in self-control to be able to muster a viable piece of offense against anyone, much less a self-assured athletic woman like Baby Doll. She'd pin him in no time—if she stopped beating him up long enough to get the three-count.

Tony Schiavone is an announcer for "World Championship Wrestling" on SuperStation WTBS and "Mid-Atlantic Championship Wrestling," broadcast locally throughout the Mid-Atlantic states.



PAUL ELLERING

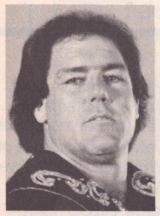
I'm really quite surprised that you would expect me to waste my time providing an analysis of a so-called "match" that is so far beyond the borders of good taste and athletic competition that it shouldn't be taking place to begin with.

Let me state right from the start that I have no preconceptions or partisan feelings toward one or the other, and quite frankly I'm against this sort of match taking place. The wrestling ring isn't the place for a woman or for a manager like Cornette. He is hardly qualified physically to step through the ring ropes and face anybody.

To be sure, I don't like Cornette, and the concept of valets is something that I feel wrestling would probably be better off without. Wrestling should remain the dominion of athletes and technicians, a forum for power and skill, not for asinine pettiness like this whole thing between Baby Doll and Cornette. I'd be much happier if Cornette spent his time signing contracts for his Midnight Express to meet my Road Warriors, instead of spending time trying to beat up a woman.

And that's the bottom line, isn't it? Cornette is trying to prove that he's a man by beating up a woman. As far as I'm concerned, any man who beats on a woman ought to be confined to a jail cell. Cornette's actions against Baby Doll were utterly reprehensible. I don't condone the match, but if pressed to choose, I'd prefer to see Cornette pay for his actions.

Paul Ellering is the manager of The Road Warriors. He was voted 1984's Manager of the Year and finished second runner-up in 1985 behind winner Jim Cornette.



TULLY BLANCHARD

Baby Doll, Baby Doll, Baby Doll . . . let me tell you the truth about Baby Doll. Or rather, let me tell you that before long, Dusty Rhodes will learn the truth about Baby Doll, just as I did. But that's another story; you asked me to analyze a Baby Doll-Jim Cornette confrontation.

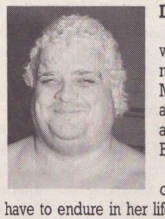
I know Baby Doll, or rather I *knew* Baby Doll. She has quite a past, you know. When she was with Gino Hernandez in the World Class area, she challenged Mike Von Erich to a wrestling match. Big deal—she outweighed him by about 75 pounds. And she must have about a hundred on Cornette.

I'll tell you, I wouldn't want to be Jim if Baby Doll decides to uncork a big splash. I'd hate to be Jim if she decides to try a legdrop, either—that flabby thigh of hers would damn near smother Cornette!

Baby Doll got messed up for trying to attack Bobby Eaton from behind. *From behind!* And we all saw what happend to her. Now she wants to try and wrestle someone face-to-face? Forget it, man, she's running some serious risks here, and she'd better be prepared to face the possibility of permanent damage to her body.

I see the match this way: Cornette takes care of Baby Doll before she even has a chance to twist her chubby face into a smile for those pimply-faced pre-pubescent fans of hers. Cornette's right—wrestling's no place for a woman. That's why Baby Doll feels right at home in the ring!

Tully Blanchard is the current National heavyweight champion. Baby Doll was his "Perfect 10" for over a year before turning on him and joining up with Dusty Rhodes.



DUSTY RHODES

Let me tell you something there, daddy, I wouldn't mind getting a piece of Cornette's skinny butt in that ring myself, but I guess me and Magnum are gonna have to settle for Condrey and Eaton. But that's okay, there's plenty to go around—me and Magnum get the Express, and Baby Doll gets skinny Jimmy.

You know, Baby Doll went through the kind of fear and pain that no woman should ever have to endure in her life. Part of a woman's very soul is the desire to bear children. That's a vital part of the human condition.

But Cornette is not human, he is sub-human. What he did to Baby Doll, and what he tried to do to her, is a human tragedy, a disgusting insult to women the world over.

You know, Jimmy Cornette says that wrestling is no place for a woman, but let me say this, Jimmy Cornette: Baby Doll is a woman's woman, a sensitive, beautiful, self-reliant female who, in all of her womanhood and femininity, is more of a man than you can ever hope to be, jack, 'cause you ain't nothing but a skinny, slimy, no-good, lowdown excuse for a . . .

I'm just gonna sit back and wait. Because I'm on Baby Doll's side, I'm gonna help her get those matches with Cornette. Her parents were both wrestlers, and she knows a thing or two about the ring herself, you can believe that. She'll squash Cornette like the worthless bug he is, jack, and it'll be a beautiful sight.

Dusty Rhodes, one of the true legends of wrestling, calls Baby Doll his "personal." The team of Rhodes and Magnum T.A. are currently feuding with Jim Cornette's Midnight Express.

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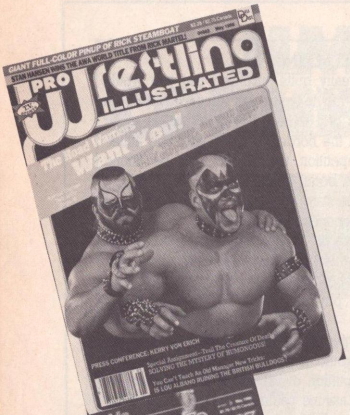

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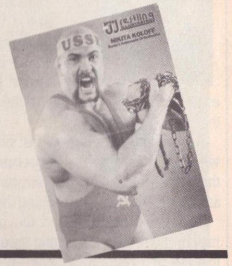

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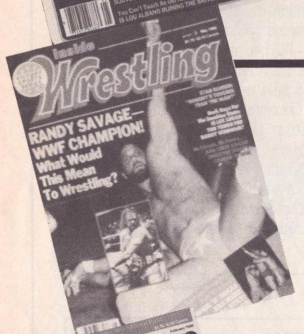

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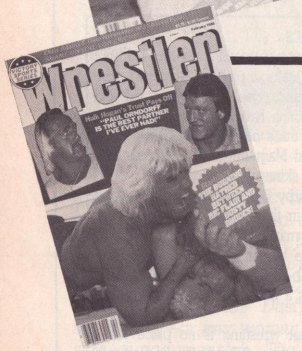

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THE CROCKETT CUP TAG TEAM TOURNAMENT

Nearly two dozen top tag teams from around the world convened in New Orleans on April 19 to compete for $1 million and the honor of winning the first annual Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup tag team tournament.

Some of the teams involved in the tournament included The Road Warriors, The Midnight Express, Ivan and Nikita Koloff, Terry Taylor and Steve Williams, Magnum T.A. and Ronnie Garvin, The Sheepherders, Hector and Chavo Guerrero, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, The Fantastics, The Fabulous Ones, Shohei Baba and Tiger Mask, and Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson.

Quarterfinal pairings saw the following four matchups: The Warriors vs. The Midnight Express (Express was disqualified), the Koloffs vs. Taylor and Williams (a draw; both teams were eliminated), T.A. and Garvin vs. Baba and Tiger Mask (T.A. pinned Tiger Mask), and The Sheepherders vs. The Fantastics (double-disqualification; both teams eliminated). With two double-eliminations in the quarterfinals, T.A. and Garvin and The Road Warriors bypassed the semifinals and moved directly into the final round.

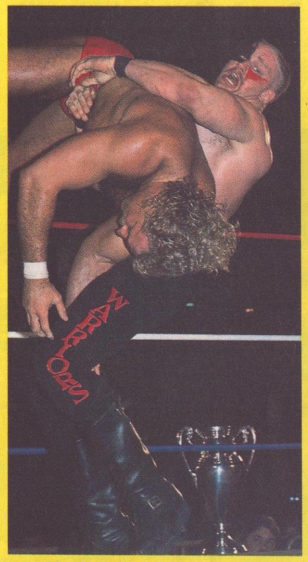
Both teams began slowly and evenly as all four men staked out each other to discern any possible flaws in style and strategy. T.A. and Garvin gained the first clear advantage, but soon T.A. began to fall victim to the Warriors' strength and power tactics.

T.A. tagged in to Garvin, who punched Hawk in the head with his injured right hand. As Garvin grabbed his hand in agony, Animal delivered a powerfully devastating clothesline and covered him for the pin, the win, and the $1 million prize.

In addition to the tag team tournament, the card featured two important singles matches. In the first, Hacksaw Jim Duggan successfully defended his North American title against Dick Slater. In the other, Ric Flair defended his NWA World title against "The American Dream" Dusty Rhodes. Dusty had Flair at a distinct disadvantage, capturing the champion in the figure-four leglock and gaining several two-counts. When referee Tommy Young accidentally got knocked out of the ring, Flair grabbed one of Dusty's boots and hit Rhodes in the head. Flair brought Young back into the ring to count the pinfall, but Dusty kicked out at the two-count.

At this point, Baby Doll came up to the ring apron and Flair went to tackle her. Seeing this, Dusty hit Flair with his boot and was disqualified by Young. Rhodes shoved Young, hit Flair several more times, then grabbed the belt and returned to his dressing room.

Rhodes traps Flair in the figure-four



Hawk suplexes Magnum T.A.

WRESTLEMANIA 2

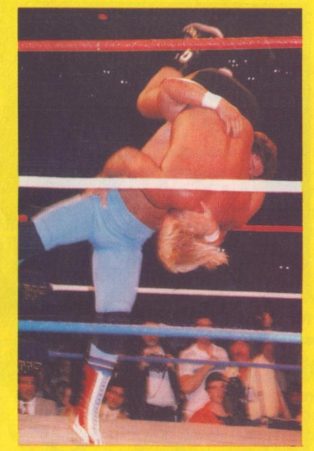
While WrestleMania 2 on March 31 might not have been "what the world is coming to see," as it was billed, a bigger chunk of the world witnessed this card than has ever in history seen any wrestling card.

There were 12 matches on the card, four each in three different locations: New York (Uniondale, New York—The Nassau Coliseum), Chicago (Rosemont, Illinois—The Rosemont Horizon), and Los Angeles (The L.A. Sports Arena).

Matches on the card ranged from poor to excellent. In the poor category, count the Mr. T-Roddy Piper "boxing" match (calling it poor is quite a gift, actually), the Magnificent Muraco-Paul Orndorff bout, and the Uncle Elmer-Adrian Adonis debacle.

However, when one talks of excellence in terms of this card, two matches come to mind: The British Bulldogs vs. Greg Valentine and Brutus Beefcake, and Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy.

In the tag team match, the Bulldogs were challenging for the WWF World tag team title—and



Smith powerslams Valentine

were successful in their quest. Valentine spent the greatest portion of the match in the ring for his team, and Dynamite Kid and Davey Boy Smith dazzled him with remarkable combinations of suplexes and powerslams (pictured here). Valentine actually had an opportunity to win the match for his team, but, with the chance to pin Smith, he pulled him off the mat at the two-count, hoping to inflict further punishment. But Smith immediately whipped Valentine into the corner where "The Hammer" hit the Kid head-to-head, collapsed into the center of the ring, and was pinned by Smith.

In the cage match, Hogan took control first, but fell to Bundy's advantage after only a few minutes. Bundy unravelled Hogan's rib bandages and wrapped them around the champion's throat. Bundy tried to leave the cage several times, but was prevented from doing so by Hogan. After about nine minutes, Hogan got fired up, reversed a Bundy whip, and bodyslammed his 446-pound challenger. Hogan delivered a legdrop and went for the cage. Exhausted, he seemed to have trouble getting over the top. Bundy was able to restrain Hogan on his first attempt, but seconds later Hogan kicked Bundy to the mat and went over the cage for the victory.

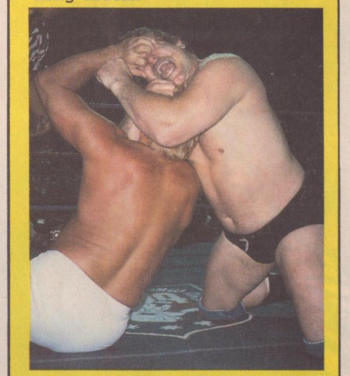
Hogan slams Bundy's gashed head into the steel cage

WRESTLEROCK '86

The Metrodome in Minneapolis was the site of the AWA's April 20 "WrestleRock '86" extravaganza. The card's 15 matches lasted over five hours, and were followed by a concert featuring country-western superstar Waylon Jennings.

There were several significant main events on the card. In battles waged in steel cages, The Road Warriors defeated Michael Hayes and Jim Garvin while Jimmy Snuka and Greg Gagne defeated Nord theBarbarian and Bruiser Brody.

In other top matches: Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo defeated The Fabulous Ones, Rick Martel and Harley Race battled to a double-countout, and Scott Hall and Curt Hennig retained their AWA World tag belts against The Long Riders.



Bockwinkel rips at Hansen's eyes

One of the biggest matches of the card was a wild brawl between AWA World champion Stan Hansen and three-time former champ Nick Bockwinkel. Many felt that Hansen would lose his title this day, having flown in from Japan the morning of the card. Special referee Steve O could barely contain the action as Hansen won by disqualification at the 10:08 mark—though the action in the match could easily have filled an entire hour!

TEXAS STADIUM PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

A barely conscious Brody pins Gordy

The third annual David Von Erich Memorial Parade Of Champions took place on May 4 and was held once again in the spectacular Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas.

Bruiser Brody may well have outshone any of the Von Erichs as being the star of the card. The wildman from Albuquerque, New Mexico, wrestled in two brutally grueling matches. The first of those was a challenge to Rick Rude's World Class title that saw Brody a 5-3 favorite at match time. Brody was disqualified in that match for throwing Rude over the top rope.

In Brody's other bout of the night, he battled longtime rival Freebird Terry Gordy in what resulted in a gory bloodbath—no surprise, considering it was a barbed wire match. Each man wrestled fiercely. Their early defense in the match was as much a defense against the barbed wire as it was defense against an opponent. But it seemed as if the barbed wire won, claiming flesh and blood in a hideous display of flowing crimson.

Gordy attempted to use a foreign object on Brody, but Brody managed to grab it out of the Freebird's hands and use it on Gordy to add extra force to a series of blows to the head. Gordy, unable to continue in the match, was pinned by Brody and unceremoniously carried out on a stretcher.

In the only title change of the card, Kerry and Lance Von Erich and Steve Simpson (substituting for Kevin Von Erich, who was sidelined with a shoulder injury) captured the World Class six-man title from The Fabulous Freebirds in an elimination match when Lance used the claw for the first time ever, dropping Buddy Roberts to the mat and scoring the pinfall.

In other results: Steve Simpson defeated Kabuki; Brian Adidas defended his Texas title against Steve Regal; Chris Adams and Brickhouse Brown defeated John Tatum and The Grappler; The Missing Link and Iceman Parsons defeated One Man Gang and Skandor Akbar (substituting for Kamala); Sunshine defeated Missy Hyatt in a mud pit wrestling match. □

INTERVIEW 86

RICK MORTON

Take Rick Morton and pair him with longtime friend and partner Robert Gibson, and you've got the incredibly successful and monumentally popular Rock 'n' Roll Express. That exciting, high-flying tag team, in existence only a bit longer than three years, has held the Mid-Southern, Mid-South, and NWA World tag team titles.

Take Rick Morton and place him in the ring with NWA World champion Ric Flair, and you've got the makings of a battle that could stretch into a one hour draw—or could end in an explosion of uncontrolled violence after only five minutes. That feud has already set 1986 ablaze with remarkable levels of action and excitement.

Rick Morton began his wrestling career in the late '70s in Tennessee. His father, a referee in the Mid-Southern area, helped Rick with his early training and guided him into the pro ranks. In 1981, Rick teamed with Eddie Gilbert, and the duo was successful in capturing the Mid-Southern tag team title. Morton soon left the area and went to Oklahoma, where he teamed with Ken Lucas. Morton and Lucas traveled to Texas where they won the Southwest tag title, then split up after a few months to wrestle as singles. Morton's most successful solo match was an incredible one-hour draw with then-AWA World heavyweight champion Nick Bockwinkel.

Morton soon returned to Tennessee where he met up with his old friend Robert Gibson. The two wrestled as singles for several months in the Mid-Southern area before they decided to form a tag team. Originally, they were going to call themselves simply "Rick 'n' Robert," but soon decided that "R 'n' R" sounded better. That suggested rock 'n' roll, and they soon came up with the name "Rock 'n' Roll Express."

The late months of 1982 were spent together in intense training, and their first match as The Rock 'n' Roll Express took place in February 1983. Since that time, Morton and Gibson have amassed legions of fans—and several important tag team championships. Their most recent accolade has been a pair of NWA World tag team titles: They first won the belts on June 9, 1985, from Ivan Koloff and Krusher Khrushchev; lost them to Ivan and Nikita Koloff on October 13; regained them from the Koloffs on November 28 at Starrcade '85; and held them until being defeated by longtime rivals The Midnight Express on February 2, 1986.

On March 29, 1986, Morton had an altercation with NWA World champion Ric Flair that was witnessed by millions of viewers watching SuperStation WTBS. After Morton and Gibson won a tag team match, Flair, who had served as a color commentator for the match, began hurling insults at Morton and Gibson and their fans. Morton took Flair's sunglasses, threw them to the floor, and smashed them under his foot. Flair slapped Morton. Morton slapped Flair. Then the two men went into the ring where Morton demonstrated complete control over the champion.

Several weeks later, in a six-man elimination tag team match, Morton and Flair were the last two men in the ring. Morton scored a pinfall over Flair, who became uncontrollably outraged. With the aid of Tully Blanchard, Arn Anderson, and J.J. Dillon, Flair stormed the Rock 'n' Rolls' dressing room and attacked Morton, grinding his face into the concrete floor and scarring him severely—perhaps permanently. The incident only served to intensify Morton's efforts against Flair.

*"Rick Morton is a man who is experiencing a great deal of anger and pain with every waking minute," said **Wrestling 86** Managing Editor Craig Peters, who recently interviewed Morton in Philadelphia. "He seems obsessed with the idea of not necessarily defeating Flair for his title, but rather causing Flair to know some of the same pain and suffering that he himself has experienced. I was happy to see that as we talked less about Flair and more about his fans, Rick began to relax, and even to joke a little bit about the Flair situation. Behind all that anger of the moment, he's genuinely one of the friendliest men in the sport."*

WRESTLING 86: These last two months have been wild ones for you, Rick. What I'd like you to do is . . .

MORTON: I'll tell you what *I'd* like to do, I'd like to take Flair, grab him by the ears, and . . .

WRESTLING 86: Hang on, now, wait a second. Please. Take a deep breath, and just think a minute. Try and take a step back from the situation between you and Flair. Detach yourself if you can for a minute.

MORTON: *(deep sigh)*

WRESTLING 86: Now, the question I want to ask is: Why? Go back before the scarring, back to the beginning. Why all this hatred between you and Flair? What's at the root of it all?

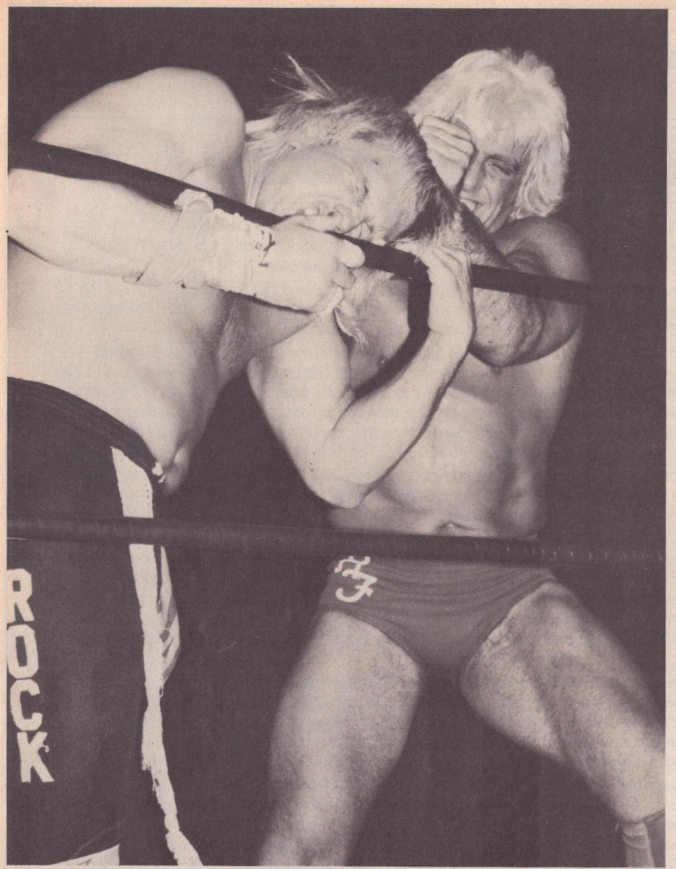
MORTON: You want to know . . .

WRESTLING 86: I want to know, deep down, when you go to sleep and really think about why you're involved in this feud, what you feel the root causes of it are.

MORTON: *(pauses)* You know, I *have* given it a lot of thought. I mean, a guy can't be angry *all* the time, even though, I'll tell you, I'm angrier these days than I've ever been in my life. Every time I look in the mirror I see that bandage and, when I take it off or change it, that ugly tear in my flesh. Every time I go to sleep and roll over on my left side, the pain shoots through my body. It's a reminder of the humiliation I had to face because of Flair. And it *was* humiliation, the humiliation of being bullied by a dressing room triple-team attack from behind. But the thing that keeps me going, and I think this answers your question, Craig, is that with the pain and all, I'm constantly reminded about the differences between me and Flair.

WRESTLING 86: And the most important difference would be . . . ?

MORTON: Well, I was just gonna say, I think the most important difference has to do with the fans, and I know it sounds sappy, and I know the fans have heard it hundreds of times before from hundreds of other wrestlers, but for me, I mean really, it's a way of life. The fans keep me going. I have respect for the fans. I appreciate what they've done for



Ric Flair grabs Morton by the hair and drags his face along the top rope. Morton regards the NWA World champion as a spoiled kid who needs to be spanked. If he can take the NWA title at the same time, he'll consider it a bonus.

me, and especially what they've done for me and Rob since we became The Rock 'n' Roll Express. Because without the fan support, The Rock 'n' Roll Express just wouldn't exist, you know what I'm saying? And Flair, he just doesn't understand that. He doesn't appreciate that the Rolex on his wrist and the Ballys on his feet and the Giorgio Armani on his back is all paid for through the blood and sweat and 50 hours a week that thousands of fans put in so that they can buy a $12 ticket. He thinks he's got all that coming to him, almost as a privilege or something, like he deserves it just by being born. Bull! He doesn't deserve [expletive], he's gotta earn it all, just like the rest of us. If Flair would wake up to that fact, he'd probably be a different man today.

WRESTLING 86: Do you think your feud with Flair will, as you say, wake him up to that fact?

MORTON: *(thoughtfully)* Probably not. Not me alone, anyway, but maybe . . . see, Flair's almost like a kid, a spoiled little kid. And when you've got a spoiled brat, you've gotta take him over your knee and spank him whenever he gets out of line. Spank him enough, and he's gonna get the message. My feud with Flair is just one spanking. If enough people stand up to him—hey, I mean, I'm not a big guy. I'm 5'11", 228, but I'm gonna stand up to the guy. I think that's a part of my advantage over him, is that he never thought I'd have the guts to meet him on his own terms. But hell, I'm gonna stand up to him, and I'm gonna give that brat the spanking he deserves. When enough people do that to Flair enough times, maybe he *will* start to get the message.

WRESTLING 86: What about the NWA World title?

MORTON: What about it?

WRESTLING 86: How badly do you want it?

MORTON: Look, the belt isn't the main reason I'm after Flair, but I'll tell you this: I've given Flair some nervous moments, I've come damn close to getting that three-count, and I've seen fear in Flair's eyes because of it. That makes me very, very happy. But it's not a case where I'll never quit until I get the belt. Hey—I'm getting my shots at Flair now, and I'm going to give each match all I've got. But my match strategy isn't based on maneuvering Flair in for a pinfall, it's more to the point of trying to give Flair a taste of his own bad medicine. I mean, if I come out of all this without the title, I'm not gonna be emotionally destroyed. But if I can oversimplify things again: I'm going to give Flair a spanking and then move on.

WRESTLING 86: Which, I assume, means you'll be back to full-time tag team action with Robert.

MORTON: Absolutely.

WRESTLING 86: How is Robert reacting to all of this? I mean, you've been as close as any tag team partners can be, and now he's pressed into singles matches, more or less out of circumstance than out of choice.

MORTON: Well sure, I reacted out of emotion. I couldn't turn back when I grabbed Flair's sunglasses off his face, I couldn't say, "Hang on a second, Ric, I want to talk this over with my tag team partner." But understand that you're right, we *are* as close as any tag team partners can be, and having been that close, Rob understands that I'm doing what I have to do.

WRESTLING 86: Does he enjoy wrestling in singles matches now?

MORTON: I think we both prefer tag team competition, but Rob is pretty levelheaded about it. I mean, he faces it philosophically. He's using this as an opportunity to hone his singles wrestling skills. I don't think I have to get into the differences between singles and tagging, the stamina, the pacing, the offense vs. the defense, and so forth. But no, Rob isn't angry about having to wrestle as a single, if that's what you're driving at. He's right there next to me whenever I step into that ring with Flair. And you know something? I think Rob is getting the itch to give Ric a shot himself! Then Flair's gonna have the whole Rock 'n' Roll Express breathing down his neck from both sides!

WRESTLING 86: I'd like to talk a minute about your fans . . .

MORTON: Greatest people in the world.

WRESTLING 86: . . . because it seems to me that the fans who follow The Rock 'n' Roll Express are a different breed than any other fans in wrestling.

MORTON: You got *that* right!

WRESTLING 86: What is it that makes this relationship between the Express and the fans so special?

Morton and Robert Gibson were already big in Houston two years ago. Today they are perhaps the most popular tag team in the world.

MORTON: I think it gets back to what I was talking about before, which is that we respect the fans, and I think in turn the fans respect us for that. When we get into that ring, we don't slack a bit. We're always giving 100 percent effort, no matter who the opponents might be. The fans have worked hard to get that money to buy a ticket to the matches, and there's no reason we shouldn't work hard in return.

WRESTLING 86: What about the rock 'n' roll connection?

MORTON: That all kind of boils down to attitude and style. I mean, look, I watch a lot of MTV, and anyone who does can see how in five years MTV has completely changed fashion, advertising, television, and movies. *Miami Vice* wouldn't exist if MTV hadn't paved the way. Half the movies that come out these days have rock 'n' roll soundtrack albums. We're a reflection of that style change, I guess. We're dynamic, action-packed, one-of-a-kind, no-nonsense wrestlers in a dynamic, action-packed, one-of-a-kind, no-nonsense rock 'n' roll world. There, how's *that* for a quote for your notebook!

WRESTLING 86: Great! Another question about your fans: Why do you think so many of your fans are young girls?

MORTON: *(mock threat)* You know, that's the same way Flair tried to insult me that day on TBS! *(laughs)* Seriously, though, I think that's really a misconception about us. Sure, we get a lot of mail from 12- and 13-year-old girls, but that doesn't mean that older fans don't like us, and that the guys don't like us; we get a lot of mail from them, too. Sure, we have a lot of girls as fans, and the young girls squeal louder than anyone else. But we have one fan club in the Carolinas consisting of three dozen guys over 60 years old, and I'm sure they don't squeal

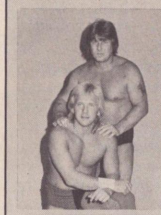
(Continued on page 46)

RICK MORTON'S TAG TEAM ODYSSEY

For the want of a detail in wrestling style or a slight shift in mental attitude, The Rock 'n' Roll Express might not have consisted of Rick Morton and Robert Gibson. It might have been Rick Morton and Eddie Gilbert. Or Rick Morton and Ken Lucas.

Morton teamed regularly with Gilbert and Lucas at different points in his career. He was successful with both men as partners, but while each new combination taught him something else about wrestling and about himself, each partner also left him with the knowledge that if he really wanted the *right* tag team partner, he'd have to look elsewhere.

On Eddie Gilbert: "I teamed with Eddie back in '81, in the Mid-Southern area. We went after the Mid-Southern tag belts; won 'em, too. We were young and hungry. Thing with Eddie, though, was that he was always very independent. We would have arguments about training schedules, details in teamwork, and development of maneuvers. There were times he didn't want to follow our game plan, when he would start developing new strategies during a match. During a match! Heck, that's not the time to do it. *Follow* the game plan now, *modify* the game plan later. It just didn't work out after a while. We really didn't connect on the same level mentally."

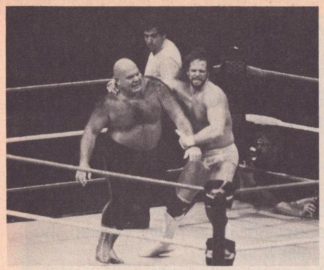


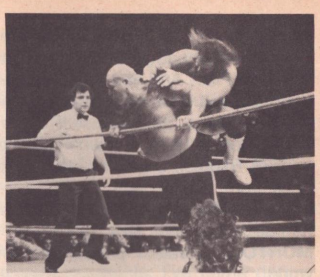
On Ken Lucas: "What a great guy. A heck of a friend. That was in late '82, early '83. Me and Ken snagged the Southwest tag belts in Texas. The thing with Ken was that I was itching to take to the air, to develop a repertoire of high-speed aerial quick-tag maneuvers. Lots of dropkicks, flying scissors, stuff like that. Ken gave it a shot, but his heart wasn't in it. He was more the sure-footed style wrestler. I don't mean to sound like I'm sneering at that style, there's a lot to be said for it, and I have a lot of respect for *all* styles of wrestling. But I had to take to the air, it was in my blood. Our differences were stylistic rather than mental. That's when we decided to part ways and wrestle as singles. I figured that would give me time to develop a solo aerial style, and to look for the right partner to tag with regularly."

On Robert Gibson: "When I went back to Tennessee in late '82, there was Rob. We were old friends, and we compared notes on our careers, what we had done, what we wanted to do, that kind of thing. Well, I don't have to tell you that something clicked. It was incredible. We both knew, and I mean we *knew,* that this was gonna be it. We both had the same goals, the same ideas of how to reach those goals, the same frame of mind. It was like having a twin brother suddenly appear out of nowhere. It was perfect."

The rest is Rock 'n' Roll history.

—Craig Peters





WHY RANDY SAVAGE WAS MUSCLED OUT OF THE WRESTLEMANIA 2 MAIN EVENT

By Peter King

BEFORE CONSIDERING THE plight of Randy "Macho Man" Savage, several facts require attention.

● While Hulk Hogan defended his title in Los Angeles, and several NFL stars (among them two Chicago Bears) battled Andre the Giant and 13 other wrestlers in a Chicago battle royal, the Nassau Coliseum, where Savage wrestled, was the only live venue to sell out for WrestleMania 2.

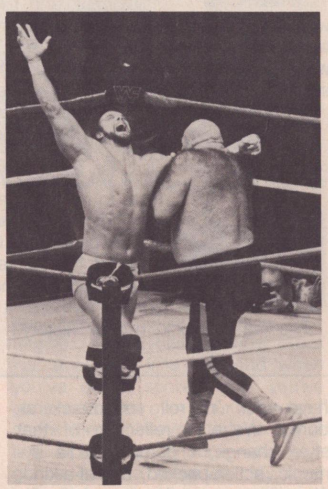
● Three weeks after WrestleMania 2, Savage wrestled Hulk Hogan at the Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Not only was the event sold out, but 6,000 mat-anxious fans filed into the nearby Cobo Arena to catch the card on closed-circuit television.

● Following WrestleMania 2, as Savage wrestled his way around the WWF circuit, he was greeted by an angry chant of "Hogan! . . . Hogan!" It is significant that the fans were *not* issuing challenging cries of "Santana! . . . Santana!" despite the unsportsmanlike way in which Savage had robbed Santana of the Intercontinental belt.

● King Kong Bundy, whose attack on Hogan in Phoenix became the centerpiece of WrestleMania 2, has not received nearly the attention—from both fans and critics—that Savage has.

Someone should have told Savage you meet the same people on the way down as you do on the way up. Only then might he have braced himself for the injustice of WrestleMania 2. While Hulk Hogan wrestled King Kong Bundy in the main event of the extravaganza, Savage—Hogan's conquerer in four of their last six matches—was hurtling his Corvette along the highway in an effort to ditch the pervading bitterness that threatened to overwhelm him.

Not since the days of the original Sheik has a wrestler been burned like Randy Savage. As Hogan's number one contender, it was Savage and not Bundy who belonged in WrestleMania 2's main event; it was Savage who deserved the financial renumerations and international recognition that the match promised. Instead, Savage became a bit player, treated like a nag in the WWF steeplechase, warring with George Steele in a preliminary bout, a dose of comic relief really.



A sellout crowd at the Nassau Coliseum saw Randy Savage defend his Intercontinental title against George Steele at WrestleMania 2. Savage's opponent should have been about eight inches taller with no hair on his shoulders and back.

The story of how Savage became the latest in a long line of WWF casualties is a winding and complicated one, a Rubik's Cube of sordid treachery and outright betrayal. It implicates men whom Savage mistook for his friends, not the bloodless mercenaries they proved to be. Men to whom friendship meant little in the pale green glow of money.

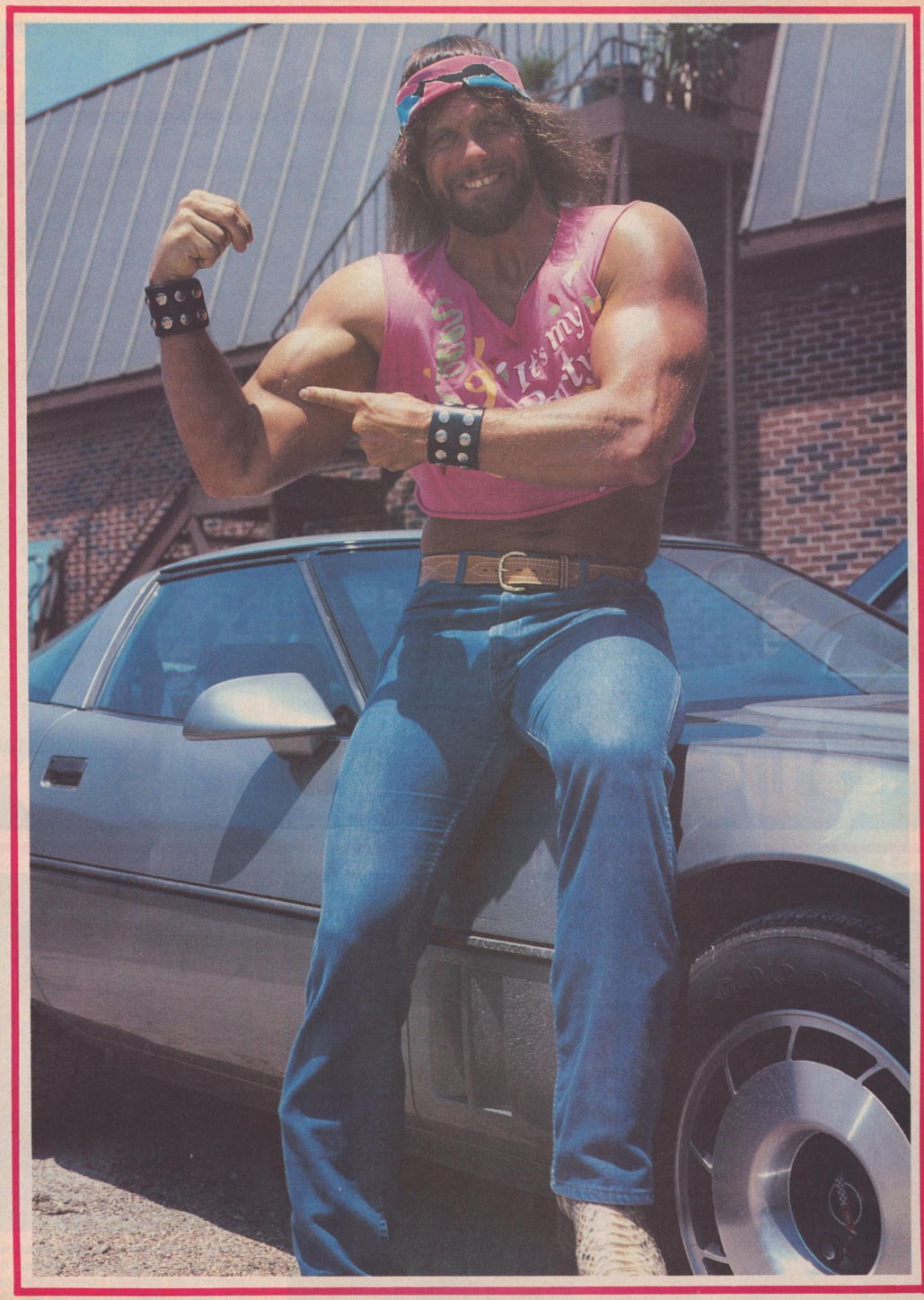
Savage can also thank the matchmaking think tanks of the WWF, those faceless office workers who push their pencils inside the plush Connecticut headquarters. Somehow, these men failed to spot the real goldmine, allowing Bundy to wrestle in the main event. Bundy, who according to nearly every poll—even after his attack on Hogan—couldn't approach Savage's recognition quotient, couldn't incite a crowd the way Macho Man could.

Savage must ultimately accept part of the blame himself. Two days after Bundy's attack on Hogan, Savage met the WWF champion for the title in a Madison Square Garden lumberjack match. Savage had defeated the champ in this arena the last two times they met, and now, with Hogan barely out of the hospital, victory seemed within his reach. A victory would have forced the WWF to change its hand. If Savage had won the WWF championship, he could have negotiated anything—and any price—he wanted from the WWF. Of course, Savage's loss to The Hulkster only cemented the Hogan-Bundy WrestleMania 2 main event.

Let's go back 14 months, to when Savage left the Mid-Southern area and began his carnivorous assault on the WWF. Reaction to Savage was immediate and immense. His high-

(Continued on page 56)

After the debacle of WrestleMania 2, Randy Savage discovered the ring may not be the most brutal battlefield of all



ANIMAL VS. HAWK

The legend of the Legion of Doom was not etched in stone atop a mountain. It owes its conquests to hard work and loyalty, as all great success stories do

By Eddie Ellner

ANDY LEFF WAS busy making love. His breathing came in harsh grunts. His hands caressed, massaged, squeezed, and finally clenched the smooth, taut surface. His grip tightened; a vein popped blue across his forehead, oxygen was gulped in greedy rapture. He lunged suddenly foward, issuing a gutteral cry. "Nice going, Leff," intoned one of the onlookers. "Good lift. Damn good lift," added another.

The hands give the man away. Despite gloves and regular applications of Vaseline, Leff's hands remain calloused odes of dedication. A planner in New York's Office of City Management, Leff is a bureaucrat by occupation, a weightlifter by obsession. He spends four days a week, five hours a day hurling iron up, down, and around his 5'10", 195-pound frame. His wife thinks he is crazy and suggests, with malicious despair, that if he devoted as much time to his work as he did to his barbells, then perhaps they would be able to afford an addition on to their 12-year-old home.

"She doesn't understand," Andy laments. "There's an indescribable beauty in carving muscle from soft flesh. I am an artist. But instead of a canvas I use my own body." He repeats to himself. "I wish she'd understand."

•

If only Andy Leff wasn't tied to family, home, and job. If only Andy Leff belonged to The Gym.

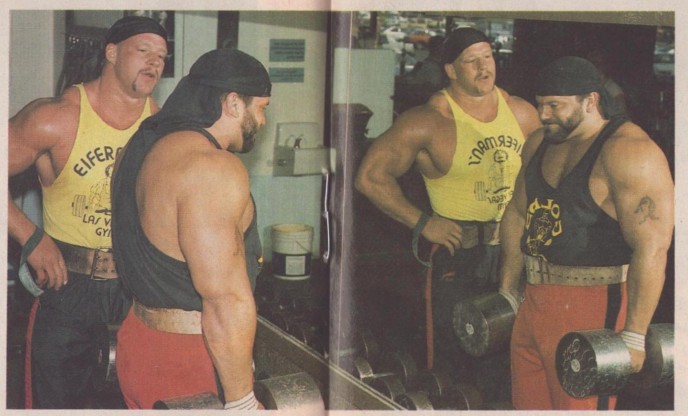
The Gym, a haven for muscle junkies in Golden Valley, Minnesota, might be the only place in the United States where The Road Warriors can go unnoticed. The Gym's clientele boasts, besides the Legion of Doom, five former Mr. Minnesotas, a Mr. World, a Mr. U.S.A., a Ms. World, and the the World arm wrestling champion, not to mention 16 other members who, when pushed, can shove over 500 pounds up on the bench press.

The tiny L-shaped club (a newer, 12,000 square foot Gym, financed in part by the Warriors, will soon open in nearby Plymouth) is not operating for the benefit of those caught up in the latest fitness craze. Here you will not find any Nautilus machines. Conspicuously absent are the oval running tracks, aerobic social classes, and mentholated steamrooms. Leg warmers are not in fashion at The Gym.

If you believe in life after death, simply go to The Gym around noon, when all the pro powerlifters and hardcore trainers take a brief rest, and scream "Weight-

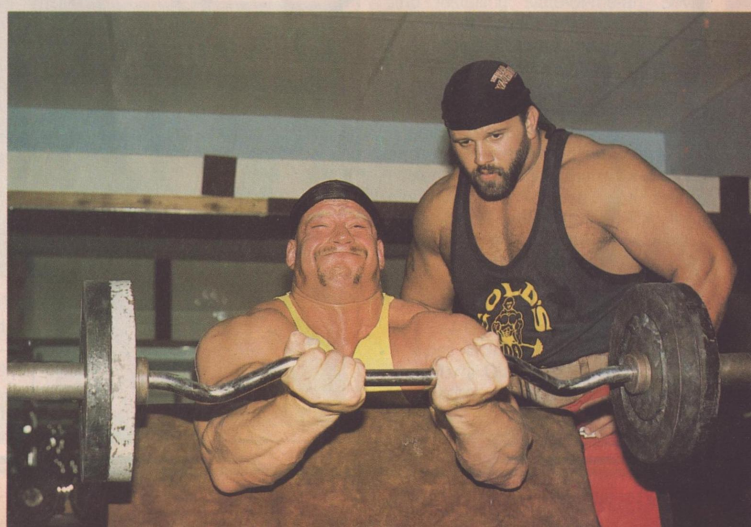
(Continued on page 50)

PUSHING EACH OTHER TO THE LIMIT!



Holding 950 pounds of weight, Animal will repeatedly shrug his shoulders, working the shoulders and generally loosening the body (left). Animal repeats the exercise with 200-pound dumbells (above).

Hawk struggles to complete his 175-pound preacher curls as Animal looks in closely (right). Knowing that the other is constantly looking over his shoulder serves as a driving factor in a Road Warrior workout.



Nikita Koloff's Assault On Magnum T.A.'s U.S. Title

WILL AMERICA WAKE UP TO A RUSSIAN NIGHTMARE?

Blood streaming down his face, Magnum T.A. desperately tries to defeat Nikita Koloff at his own game—the Russian chain match.

In a perfect world, wrestling is the ultimate one-on-one athletic confrontation. In an imperfect world, wrestling can never be that pure. Magnum T.A.'s small wars with Nikita Koloff have become components of a much larger, a much colder, war

By Dave Rosenbaum

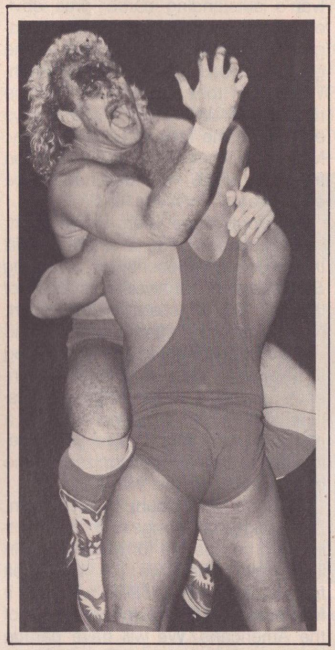
MOSCOW IN JANUARY. Men and women walk briskly down the streets, never pausing to let the cold catch up to them. The sun rarely shines and the pace rarely slows, except for an occasional party-sanctioned rally or that rarest of events, a crime in the streets. Soviet citizens instinctively know their limits and instinct says don't slow down.

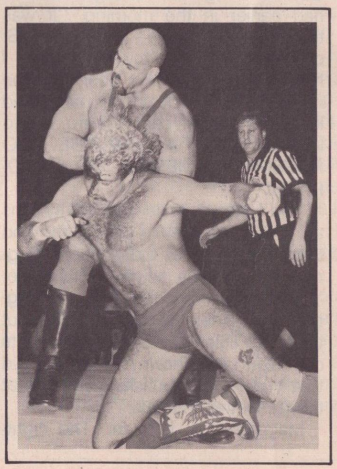
In a government building near Red Square, the Soviet Council on the Control and Development of Athletics is quickly going through its agenda on the upcoming Goodwill Games. Several members are still perturbed that an event sponsored by American magnate Ted Turner is being held in Moscow, but dollars and cents are enough to silence their objections. Capitalists they're not. Realists they are.

Talk of the Goodwill Games is quickly tabled and Valery Kharnovsky rises to speak. At 75 years old, Kharnovsky is the senior member of the SCCDA and his words command immediate respect. "Comrades," Kharnovsky says, "the time has come for us to supply greater funding to our professional wrestlers in the United States. Every day they put honor of our country on the line. Support must be greater!"

Kharnovsky goes on to tell the council members about Nikita Koloff, who he says is the greatest living Russian athlete, and the American, Magnum T.A., holder of the United States championship. "If Nikita can somehow win U.S. championship from this Magnum T.A.," explains Kharnovsky, "it would be great embarrassment to the American people. Imagine! *United States* belt in hands of a Soviet! Ha ha!"

His sinister laugh belies his age, but Kharnovsky has been around long enough to know how to get under the American's skin. He watched with great interest when the Americans lost their prized America's Cup to an Australian yachting team. He was amused by the patriotic reactions of the Americans, who usually care little about this highbrow sport. Wrestling, however, is one of the most popular sports in the United States. Kharnovsky is aware of this and knows that a show of Russian superiority would certainly make these capitalists red in the face.





Gasping for air, Magnum T.A. tries to withstand the agony of Koloff's bearhug (above). The Ambassador of Destruction plants a forearm in the back of Magnum's neck (below).

Weeks later, before a nationwide television audience, there were strong indications that the Soviet plan was already in effect. "The Kremlin has ordered that our superior athlete, Nikita Koloff, not appear on American television again until he gets a chance to wrestle Magnum T.A. for the United States championship here on TV," said Nikita's uncle, Ivan Koloff.

"We know the reason all of the NWA television programs get such a great rating is because of the constant appearance of Nikita," Ivan boasted. "That will all change. The next time the American people see him he will be wrestling—and defeating—Magnum T.A. on nationwide TV."

So this was the Soviet plan: control the nation's airwaves and wreak Nielsen havoc on the NWA. But that wasn't all. Weeks later, workers, American workers, were seen expanding Nikita's already large gym and installing state-of-the-art Soviet training devices.

A United States correspondent for the SCCDA paid numerous visits to Nikita's home. Back in the Soviet Union, the party newspaper, Pravda, supplied unusually intensive coverage of the American wrestling scene, particularly the World Championship region. And, of course, the names Nikita Koloff and Magnum T.A. were mentioned prominently. The wheels were in motion and moving toward Magnum T.A.

•

NEW ORLEANS IN April. The Super Bowl is a distant memory and Mardi Gras has come and gone for another year. The weather is getting warmer, but the tourist trade is down. One can now walk down Bour-

bon Street without bumping into a thousand strangers, then go into a local bar, sit down, order a drink, and relax in a relatively quiet atmosphere. Of course, everything is relative in New Orleans.

But suddenly, the street becomes crowded and the noise level grows. A mob of children and women surrounds a large, muscular man who seems oblivious to the local speakeasies but thought he had found the quickest route to his destination.

Guess again. Magnum doesn't often defend his U.S. title in this part of the country, but he is a former North American champion and he has certainly not been forgotten. "The fans just come out of the woodwork whenever I'm around," he said proudly. "I figured that down here at this time of year, there wouldn't be a crowd. I guess I was wrong." He stopped for nearly half an hour to speak with his fans and sign autographs. The life of a popular champion is never just fun and games. For Magnum T.A., it's *never* fun and games.

"There's a constant threat out there," T.A. explains. "A constant threat to my title and well-being. Everybody wants what I have, and I'll have to work extra hard to keep it. Now [Tully] Blanchard, he's no trouble. The guy wakes up 15 minutes before his match, lifts a few weights, and afterward he parties the entire night. Not Nikita Koloff, though. I've heard that he disappears into his gym for days. I'm not going to take this guy lightly, but I'm always ready to take him on."

●

WHEN NIKITA KOLOFF was growing up, he heard countless tales about his famous uncle who wrestled in the United States and had achieved great success. In the Soviet Union, a child does not decide what he wants to do with his life. The Communist Party, or his parents, make the decision for him and the child usually has no choice but to follow this predetermined course. Nikita Koloff's parents wanted him to be a nuclear engineer.

But Nikita was no ordinary child. He had amazing strength and size. Many people remarked that Nikita was the image of his uncle, Ivan. By the time Nikita was 16 years old, it was obvious to everyone that he would be a great athlete. And when Ivan returned to Russia for May Day one year, Nikita's sport was chosen. He would be a professional wrestler and Ivan would be his manager, tutor, and partner.

The work ethic that had guided Ivan's outstanding career was obviously built into Nikita, too. The younger Koloff loved working out in the gym and building up his strength. When Ivan took his nephew into the ring, the desire to learn was always evident on the face of Nikita. Shortly, Ivan knew what the world would soon find out. Nikita was destined to be even greater than his uncle.

After only three years in the sport, Nikita appears to be a cinch to fulfill this prophecy. Recently in *Wrestling Superstars*, an analysis was done of the top 20 wrestlers in the sport. Nikita ranked eighth overall and earned perfect scores for conditioning and power. With additional experience against a wider range of wrestlers and styles, it appears to be a matter of only four or five years before Nikita Koloff is recognized as the best wrestler in the world.

"There's no doubt," says Ivan. "He's biggest, strongest, most talented, and he has me for a manager. In little while when we get U.S. belt from Magnum T.A., Nikita will have it for life and stick it down the throats of the Americans. We will have parade for him in Moscow and he will be national hero."

●

IT'S MIDDAY, but Magnum T.A. is still shaking from a nightmare he had earlier in the morning. "It was the strangest thing," said the U.S. champion. "I'm in my house and I hear a knock on the door. It's the newsboy, so I pick up the paper and look at the front page. There, in big letters, it says 'T.A. LOSES BELT TO RUSSIAN. AMERICA IS RED-FACED.'

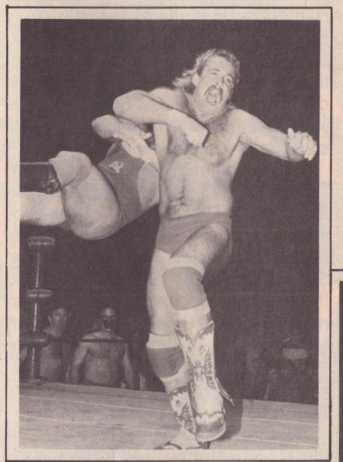
"So I step outside and all my fans are there, but they're booing me and throwing things at the house," Magnum says with a shiver in his voice. "I try to tell them that it's me, Magnum T.A., their favorite wrestler, but then this little 10-year-old kid shouts out, 'You let us down. My father said that you let the Russians prove that they're better than us.' "

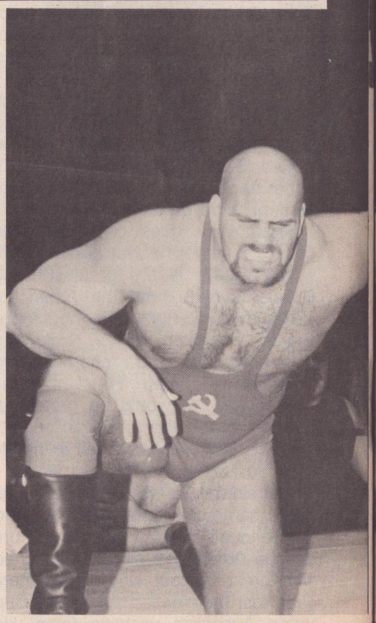
Magnum T.A. is silent. The nightmare was too real. He could see each of the faces in the crowd. He'd seen them before, in the arenas and crowding outside the dressing rooms, urging him on, saying how much they loved him. How could they turn on him so quickly?

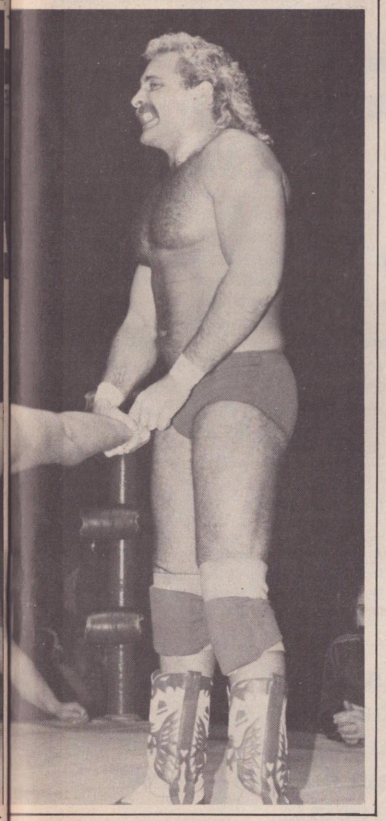
Just keep telling yourself, Magnum, it's only a dream. It's only a dream. It's only a dream. "But this is more than just one wrestler against another or some stupid feud," Magnum explains. "I know that every time I step into the ring against Nikita Koloff, the weight of the entire nation is on my back. That's a heavy load to carry."

"I really feel for Magnum," says Ronnie Garvin, an occasional tag team partner, "but there's really nothing anybody can do. Actually, it's the name of the title that makes it a problem. United States champion. I mean, if it was called something else, there wouldn't be so much pressure on the guy, but Nikita is an awesome wrestler and, apparently, he has his sights set on getting the belt."

"You tell Magnum T.A. that I destroy him in front of his entire country," shouts Nikita Koloff. "I will be hero in my country and Magnum will be laughing stock of capitalist nations. Russian superiority will come through. I will complete my task!"□





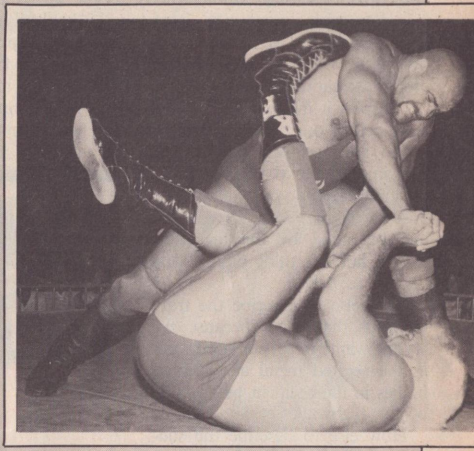


A vicious elbowsmash by Magnum lifts the 275-pound Russian right off his feet (opposite left). A subtle twist of the wrist has Nikita in tremendous pain (below).

KOLOFF TO FLAIR: "YOU'RE NOT OFF THE HOOK"

Nikita Koloff has Magnum T.A. on his mind for now, but it was just about a year ago that Koloff took on NWA World champion Ric Flair as part of the Great American Bash in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Nikita and Ivan locked themselves in a dungeon for months before the meeting with Flair, coming up only to wrestle. This intensive training nearly paid off, but after 40 minutes of almost non-stop action Flair took advantage of a break and pinned Nikita to retain the title. The match, however, was one of the most memorable of the year and was voted second runner-up in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated's* tabulations for 1985. In the ensuing series of rematches, Koloff came close but was never able to topple the champion.



Koloff outmuscles—and nearly pins—Ric Flair.

Though Koloff has since turned his attentions to Magnum T.A.'s U.S. title, he has not forgotten Flair. "I am much better wrestler than I was last year and once I win U.S. title, I will go after NWA belt," he said. "Ric Flair, you're not off the hook!"

Naturally, Flair arrogantly tosses aside Nikita's threats. "You're talking about a man who locked himself in a dungeon for three months, did little else but train and wrestle, came into the championship match in peak form, and still got pinned," said Flair. "What does he mean, I'm not off the hook? Nikita Koloff is yesterday's news."

Yesterday's news would quickly become tomorrow's main event if Nikita won the U.S. title from Magnum T.A. The belt assures its holder of increased title chances and a series of matches between Nikita and Flair would be imminent. Officials from the NWA fairly salivate at the thought of such a series, even though it would involve two rulebreakers.

"Flair vs. T.A. is a big drawing card for us," said one NWA promoter, "and we're certainly happy that it's turned out so well. But Flair-Nikita would really pack the houses. Particularly if Nikita had the U.S. title. It would be one of the biggest draws of all time."

It's also popular opinion that Nikita has improved tremendously since his first series with Flair. "The guy used to just overpower his opponents, but now he can outwrestle them, too," said J.J. Dillon, the manager of Tully Blanchard. "If Ivan wasn't managing him, I'd definitely want to work with Nikita. He's capable of beating any wrestler around."

Ivan Koloff is a little more cautious when discussing a new series between Nikita and Flair. "In my country, we take things one at a time," said Ivan. "We don't rush things like you do in this country. That's why your space ships all blow up. Somebody panics and pushes the button and *poof!* Me and Nikita take our time. First crush T.A. Then crush whoever comes along next."

—Dave Rosenbaum

RAGE IN THE CAGE:

By Craig Peters

VIOLENCE IS COMPELLING. There's nothing embarrassing or shameful about that; it's human nature. Something in all of us becomes fascinated when a human body is forced to accept massive levels of injury and suffering. At times it seems that the more repulsive the violence, the more fascinating it becomes.

I suspect it fascinates because we are reminded of our own tenuous grasp on health and well-being. We find comfort in the fact that we remain mentally sound and physically unscathed, just as we are relieved and reassured by the fact that such a horrible thing didn't happen to *us*.

How else to describe the traffic jams that occur because everyone wants to take a good look at the twisted metal and twisted bodies in the accident by the side of the highway?

How else to describe the success of *Faces Of Death,* a videocassette purporting to depict "real" scenes of the most violent forms of death and torture imaginable?

How else to describe the rise in intensity of wrestling fans' cheers, the burning bloodlust in their eyes, the smiles that curl their lips when metal mixes with flesh in that orgy of blood and horror called the steel cage match?

***

If there is any truth to a rock 'n' wrestling connection, then cage matches are the sport's equivalent of heavy metal madness. But even the crunching guitars of Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, and Motley Crue are no match for the crunching fusions of bone and steel mesh that provide riff and melody to the backbeat of flowing blood and the vocal stylings of men in pain.

At Starrcade '85, one was both thankful and horrified for the fact that a microphone was present in the ring during Magnum T.A. and Tully Blanchard's methodical and horrific cage match mutilation of each other's bodies. Thankful in that the verbal realities of that match provided an otherwise lost dimension to an incredibly violent confrontation; horrified because that dimension was totally and utterly sickening.

WHERE VIOLENCE IS SCIENCE!

"AAURRGGHH!"

The screams of pain rumbled up from the depths of Magnum T.A.'s very soul as Tully Blanchard ground the coarse surface of the microphone into Magnum's already bloody head.

Few fans turned away in disgust. Indeed, for the thousands that were on hand in Charlotte, North Carolina, and for thousands more watching on closed-circuit television in Atlanta, those cries of agony were a call to arms. It was time for Magnum's fans to rally behind him, to vocalize their support, to implore their hero to rise to new levels of inhumanity.

They did not fail Magnum. And Magnum did not fail his fans. Or his purpose. Minutes later, T.A. would use the broken shards of a wooden chair leg in an attempt to puncture Blanchard's eye. Wisely, Blanchard managed to gurgle an "I Quit!" in between his gasps for air, gasps made all the more difficult by the flow of blood that ran from his head into his mouth, formed tiny pools in his throat, and threatened to block his esophagus once and for all.

Magnum T.A., one of the most scientifically schooled wrestlers in the sport, had achieved what many fans still feel is his greatest victory ever. And he had done so by being more animalistic, more savagely ferocious, than Tully Blanchard.

It's not wrestling. It's a world where the science of the sport is forsaken in favor of pure bestial violence. Where victory really doesn't matter—it's survival that counts.

It's the world of the steel cage match.

***

Tracing the origins of the cage

(Continued on page 60)

A chain link sinks a quarter-inch beneath the surface of Bob Sweetan's forehead as Tully Blanchard graphically displays the most brutal aspect of a most brutal sport.

Violence in any form is never pretty, but in the one-on-one competitive world of wrestling it can become truly fascinating. Add a steel cage to the equation, and the result is a heightened level of violence—and a certain bizarre beauty that only a hardcore fan can appreciate

LANCE VON ERICH

THE PAST EIGHT months have been tumultuous ones for Lance Von Erich. Fresh from a strong rookie year in the Pacific Northwest (where he wrestled under the name "Ricky Vaughn" so as to build his own reputation and not trade off on the established Von Erich name), Lance arrived in the World Class area to the cheers of the Texas fans and the fists of The Fabulous Freebirds.

During his first weeks in the World Class area, Lance feuded with the 'Birds in six-man matches alongside his cousins Kerry and Kevin. He battled such formidable opponents as One Man Gang and Rick Rude. He wrestled NWA World champion Ric Flair. And he quickly won the hearts of the Texas fans with his matinee idol looks and his high-flying, barefoot wrestling style.

Those weeks stretched into months, and all during that time Lance was undergoing an important settling-in process.

"There was a while there where I felt like I should have been living out of the trunk of a car," Lance says with a chuckle. "I mean, Kerry and Kev were kind enough to let me bunk down in their houses, they both have nice guest rooms and all, but I was really itching to get into my own place. But it was hard, because here I was, new in the World Class area, nervous about whether the fans would like me, scratching to get some good matches, and working real hard to shift my style over to the Texas roughhouse brand. Plus ring sparring and weight training. Who had time to look for a place to live?"

Once Lance settled into the groove of World Class wrestling, however, his life became more ordered. He began to set aside time for gym work, time for sparring, time for planning match strategies—and, eventually, time for house-hunting.

"Like I said, Kerry and Kev were both great about letting me crash with them, they helped me get acclimated to Texas real, real fast. But I started to feel like I was stepping over that line from being a guest to being a full-time resident. Kind of like John Belushi on the old *Saturday Night Live,* you know, the horror movie spoof, *The Thing That Wouldn't Leave!* I know I'm exaggerating a bit, but after about two months I had to find the time to find a house."

The home that Lance found is located in Arlington, and it's a quiet haven from the harsh rigors of the squared circle.

"Don't get me wrong," Lance said, "I love the sport of wrestling, I love my cousins, I love the fans, and I love my life. But there are times when I come home that I just want to be *home.* Alone. I've done my weight training for the day, and I want to forget about feuding, I want to forget about dropkicks and iron claws, and I just want to relax and cleanse my mind. I like to cook a little bit, and I like to read. Mostly books on art."

Lance's den, which sports a beautiful natural rock fireplace, is lined with shelves that are jam-packed with books on African and pre-Colombian art. There are also dozens of pieces of African and pre-Colombian sculpture scattered throughout his home.

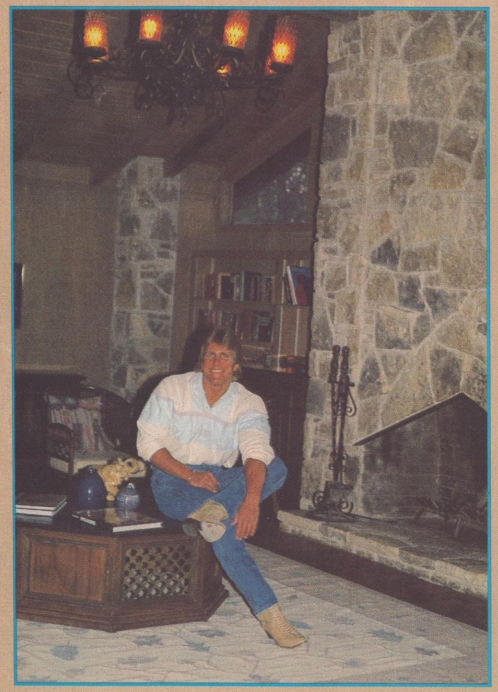
"And if I'm looking for something a little more action-packed, I'll hop on my bike and just cruise around the backroads of Dallas-Ft. Worth. The feel of the wind is terrific. I kind of ride aimlessly and think about anything that happens to pop into my brain. It's really, really relaxing."

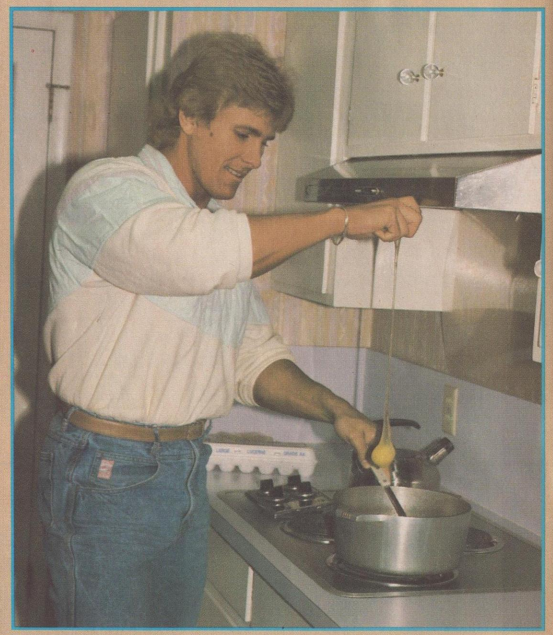
Now that those first transition-period months are over, Lance seems to have settled in to life in Texas with remarkable ease.

"I've gotten into the flow of things here in Texas, I feel like I'm wrestling really well, and I finally have my own home where I can go and relax. I honestly can't see it getting much better than this . . ."

Lance smiled.

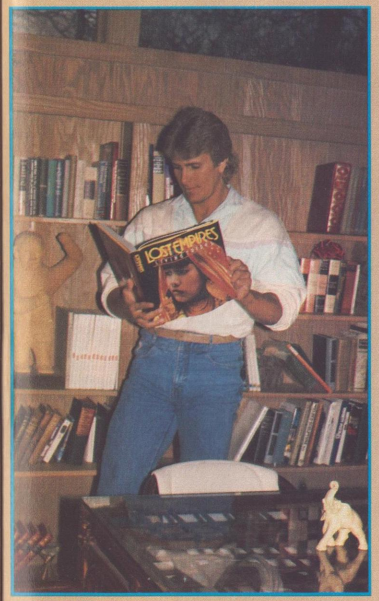
" . . . then again, there's this title belt around Rick Rude's waist!" □

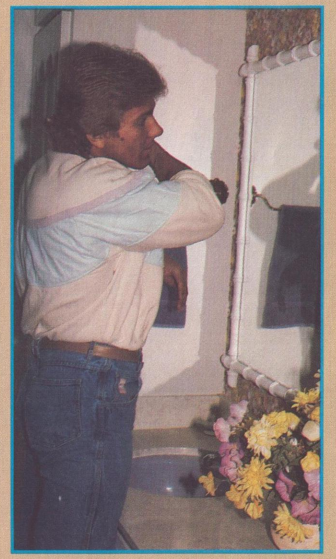


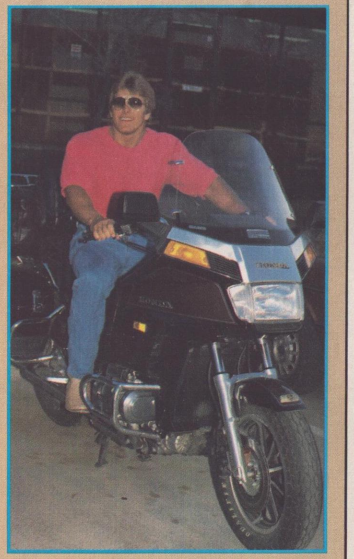


Left: Lance spends most of his time at home in the comforts of his beautiful den. Above: Lance, who does all his own cooking, appears be be enjoying himself as he prepares a quick meal for our photographer, Bill Apter.

Von Erich is intrigued by archeology and the study of ancient civilizations. Below: Lance flips through his copy of *Lost Empires—Living Tribes.* Right: One of Lance's prized possessions is this pre-Colombian god of fertility.







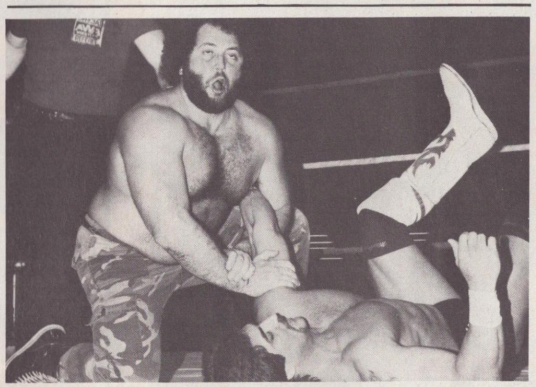
Above left: While regarded as one of the best-looking athletes in America, Lance is not a vain man. "One combing at the beginning of the evening and then no more trips to the mirror," he jokes. Above right: Von Erich enjoys the freedom that his Honda 1200 provides.

Former WWF tag team champions Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff stand at attention while Volkoff sings the Russian national anthem.

YOU DECIDE

SHOULD ANTI-AMERICAN WRESTLERS BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE?

IN A RECENT issue of our sister publication *Wrestling Superstars*, Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie admitted what many people had already suspected. "For more than a year I talked with leaders of the Arab world," said Al-Kaissie, "getting advice for how to destroy Yankee pigs. Some advise spending petrol megabucks to hire cruel monsters like Barbarian and Stomper. But my best friend, Col. Khadafy, he advises terrorism . . ."



Abdul Khadafy, who claims to be a second cousin of Libyan leader Col. Moammar Khadafy, applies an armlock on Wendell Cooley. Khadafy and other anti-American wrestlers are considered by many to be a threat to our national security.

Talked with leaders of the Arab world? Destroy Yankee pigs? Best friend Col. Khadafy? Terrorism? And the most chilling aspect of all: Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie manages wrestlers in the United States, in front of American fans, and for American money. Imagine the consequences if Al-Kaissie were to mastermind a terrorist attack in the dressing room of a crowded arena. Thousands dead, thousands injured, and American greenbacks used to do the dirty deed.

Should anti-American wrestlers be allowed to compete in the United States? It's a question that must be answered before the aforementioned situation is allowed to occur. Not only is the reputation of wrestling at stake, but also millions of lives and our national security.

"This is truly a major issue," said political activist and lawyer Sherman Weinstadt. "There's really a lot more to it than meets the eye. I mean, should we ban all foreigners from working in the United States? After all, our country is a melting pot, built on a foundation of people from different backgrounds coming together. And don't forget the First Amendment, the basis for all the laws in this country. Without freedom of speech, we'd be just like the Soviets.

"Let me elaborate," Weinstadt continued. "There were many powerful people in government who thought that Martin Luther King Jr. had communist ties. He was perceived as a threat to this country and many people felt his ideas were anti-American. Of course, we recently designated a national holiday in his honor, so it shows how our thinking has changed.

"Now, I'm not saying that in 10 or 20 years we'll be celebrating "Iron Sheik Day" or "Koloff Day," but the fact is that the laws of our country allow them to make a living here and speak their minds, as long as they don't hurt anybody or threaten our national security."

National security appears to be the key issue. Days after the United States retaliated against Libya, Al-Kaissie said that he would do everything in his power to gain revenge. Shortly after the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, Nikita Koloff refuted American claims of widespread death in the Ukraine and added, "It will take more than a nuclear accident to keep my country from taking over the world."

There is widespread suspicion that these anti-American wrestlers are funneling money into terrorist causes. Although this has yet to be proven, an informant from the United States government recently reported that unnamed sources witnessed a man withdrawing a large sum of money from a New York bank and walking into the Russian Embassy. This man allegedly fit the description of Ivan Koloff.

Can this be allowed to happen? Don't the wrestling fans of this country deserve some assurance that their hard-earned money isn't going toward the destruction of our way of life? Apparently not. The laws of the United States do not prohibit contributions to foreign governments.

"There's really not much we can do about how they spend their money or where they spend it," said Mag-

(Continued on page 59)

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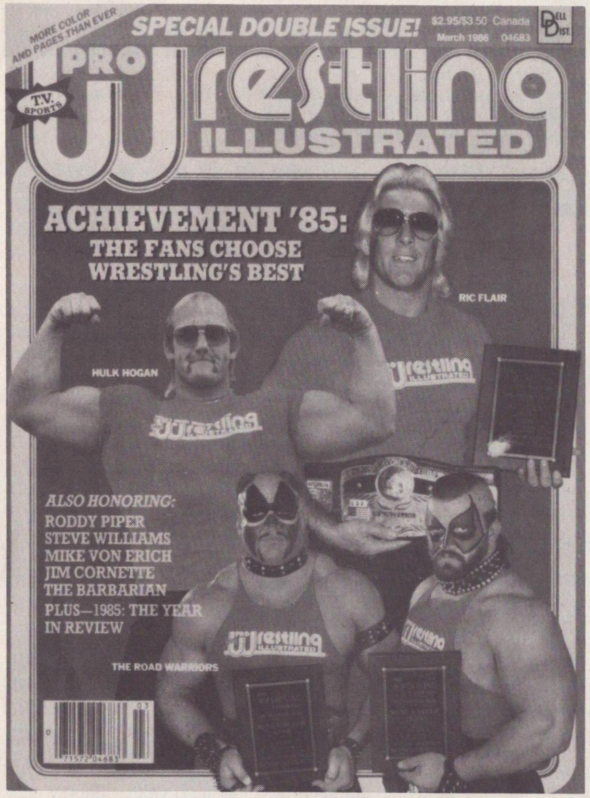

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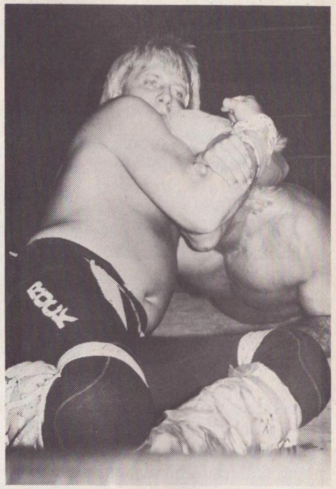
Interview 86

(Continued from page 31)

too loudly! But they're just as much our fans as those 12-year-olds.

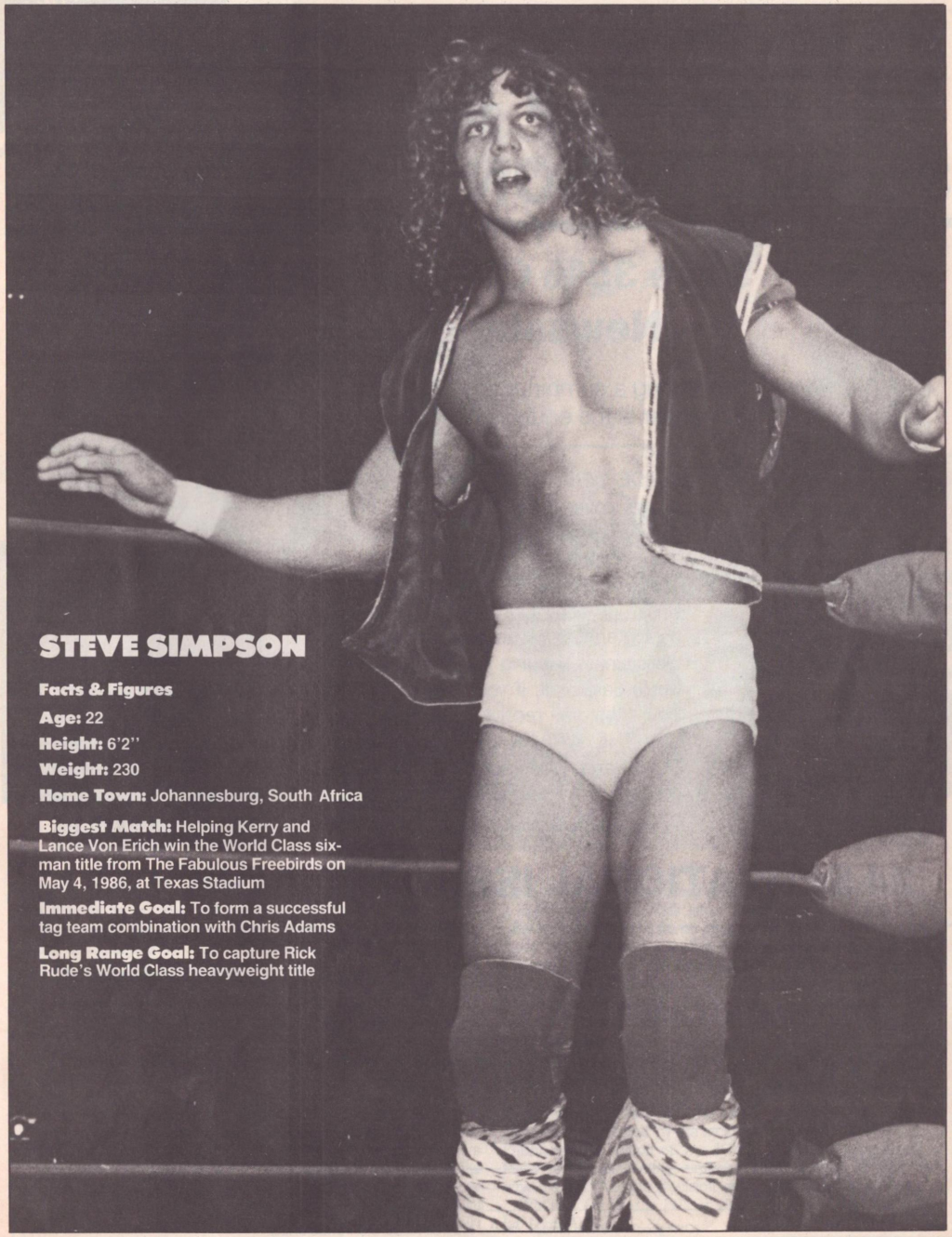
WRESTLING 86: I get the impression from your tone of voice, hearing you talk about your fans, that you're almost concerned about each one of them individually, almost as if you'd be upset to find out that one of them walked away from one of your matches unhappy.



Morton has put a heavy price tag on the humiliation Flair has caused him and the insulting manner in which he has talked about the Rock 'n' Rolls' fans.

MORTON: Oh, absolutely. It's like any rock 'n' roll band. A good producer can make them sound great in the studio, but if they can't kick out the jams in a live concert, they're not worth a damn as far as I'm concerned. Same with us. We can do a video of match highlights in the TV studio and sound real mean on interviews and look good to the fans and all, but if we can't produce when it comes down to match time, we're yesterday's garbage, brother. The worst advertisement for The Rock 'n' Roll Express is if we fail to give that 100 percent effort in a match. You can play around with videotape all you want, but you can't fool the fans in person. I keep saying it, but only 'cause I mean it: The fans are our bottom line. There are really *three* components to The Rock 'n' Roll Express: Me, Rob, and the fans. And that ain't hype, brother, that's the God's honest truth. □

BEST BET



STEVE SIMPSON

Facts & Figures

Age: 22

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 230

Home Town: Johannesburg, South Africa

Biggest Match: Helping Kerry and Lance Von Erich win the World Class six-man title from The Fabulous Freebirds on May 4, 1986, at Texas Stadium

Immediate Goal: To form a successful tag team combination with Chris Adams

Long Range Goal: To capture Rick Rude's World Class heavyweight title

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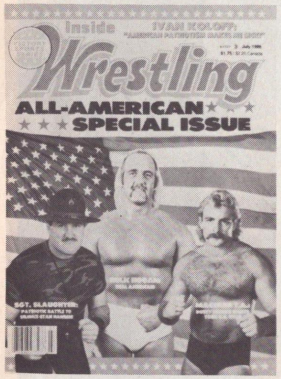

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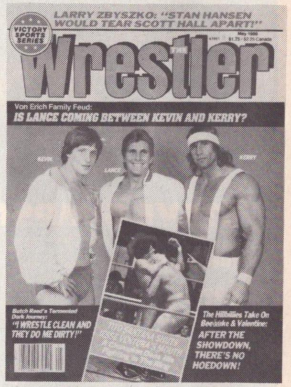

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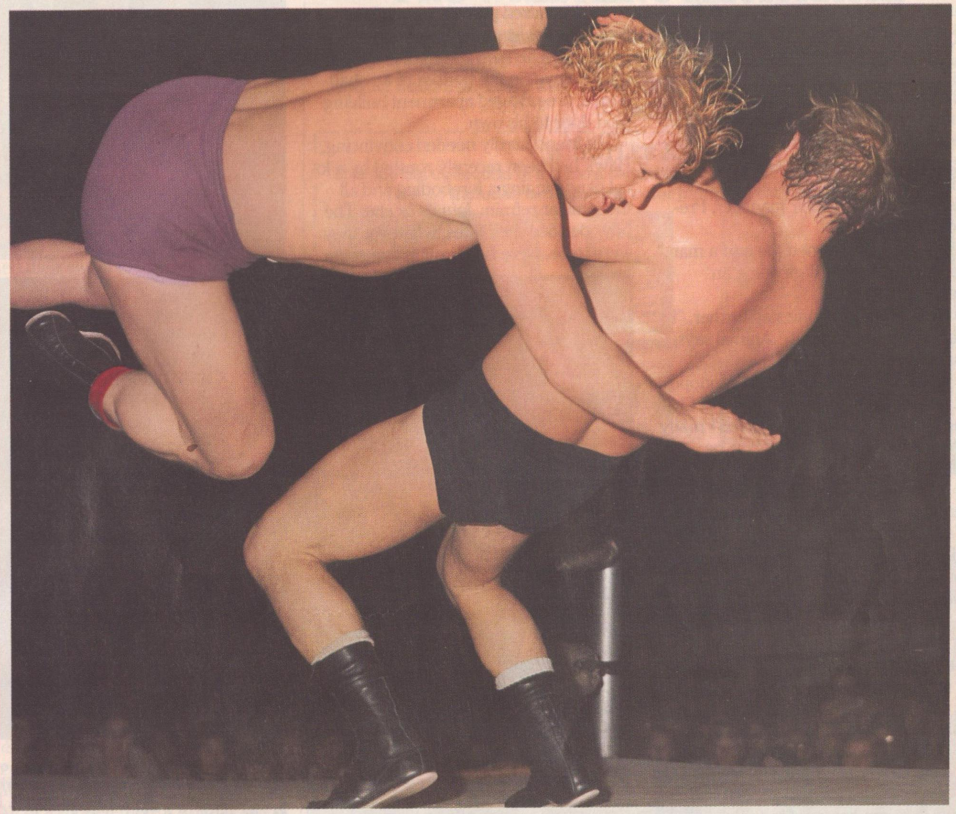
GOLDEN MOMENT

THE LORD VS. THE CHAMP



SOMETIMES YOU'VE JUST got to feel sorry for Lord Al Hays. There he is, week after week, playing Ed McMahon on *Wrestling TNT* to Vince McMahon's Johnny Carson. Always the butt of a joke and the recipient of verbal abuse, and nary a word about his accomplished wrestling career.

But back in 1972, Lord Al was among the sport's top stars. And on a warm evening in April, Hays (at the time the Western States champion) ventured to Amarillo, Texas, home of then-NWA World heavyweight champion Dory Funk Jr., and wrestled for the most coveted prize in the entire sport.

It was a best-of-three-falls match. Dory won the first fall via pinfall at the 17:01 mark, and Hays bounced back in the second fall to win a submission via the figure-four leglock after 7:08.

The third and deciding fall will be remembered by longtime Texas fans as a true classic. Hays took the early advantage with a flying tackle (pictured), backdrop, and bodypress combination, but Dory bounced back and caught the Lord with an abdominal stretch. Hays managed to break the hold, and Dory moved in with his signature move, the spinning toehold. The fans—and especially Dory—were shocked when Hays broke *that* hold as well.

Hays maneuvered Funk into a Boston crab but passed up the submission attempt in favor of administering more punishment. About 11½ minutes into the fall, Hays went for a pin. The referee slapped the mat three times—Lord Al Hays had pinned Funk and won the title!

After the referee had counted the pin, Dory Sr. jumped to the ring apron and shoved the referee, who then turned to Dory Jr. and screamed, "You're disqualified!" Incredibly, the referee had disqualified the loser! And because of the disqualification, Dory Funk Jr. *retained* his NWA World title!

A blur of legal activity followed the bizarre decision as Hays filed several protests with the NWA. The wrestling world was shocked and stunned by the incident, which was reported in the February 1973 edition of *The Wrestler*. Referee Jerry Kozak offered several conflicting explanations as to why he had done what he did, but the decision was allowed to stand.

Whether the year is 1972 or 1986, you've just got to feel sorry for Lord Al Hays. □

Animal vs. Hawk

(Continued from page 35)

lifters are a bunch of boneheads."

This is a world where muscle and iron are referred to interchangeably, where the groan of leather mixes with the jangle of steel to create a Herculean symphony. The Gym is a universe of metal rods and weighted discs, where mortals can watch supermen and women fling 35-pound plates about like frisbees.

This is where a pair of 175-pound high school dropouts and an Ivy League educated weightlifting guru became known as the Legion of Doom. The success of Hawk and Animal is as much dependent upon the time they spend in this Gym as it is on the stratagems devised for them by their manager, Precious Paul Ellering.

"Weightlifting turned me into a man," Hawk says firmly. "It gave me an identity."

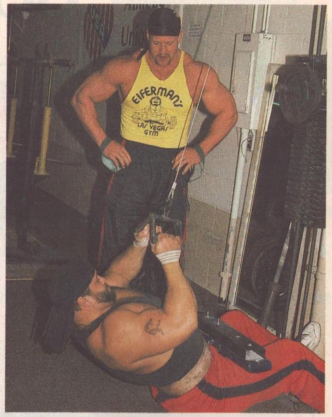
His partner goes one step further. "It was either go work out," Animal says, "or go directly to jail."

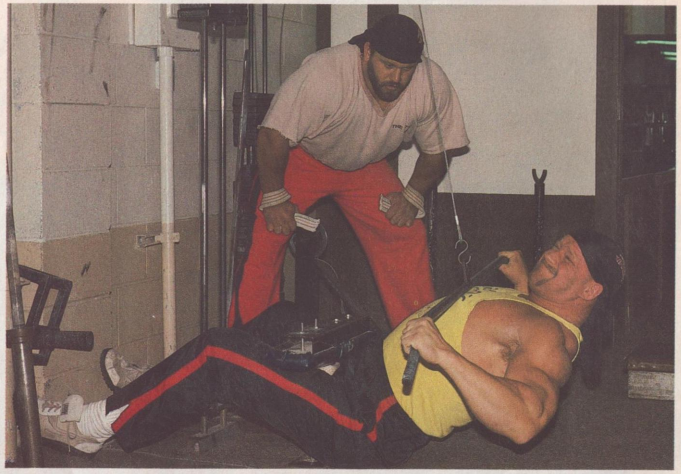
Animal is not talking about Monopoly. "If you grow up in the streets of Chicago," he continues, "you haven't many alternatives. Either be tough or be killed."

As a youth, Animal tap-danced through the smokey, bloody desolation of Chicago's South Side, the haunted cries of the slaughterhouse a bizarre soundtrack for any child to grow up with. His encounters with street gangs—to which he refused to belong—and other lurking dangers, of which there thousands, were survived by a combination of guile and luck.

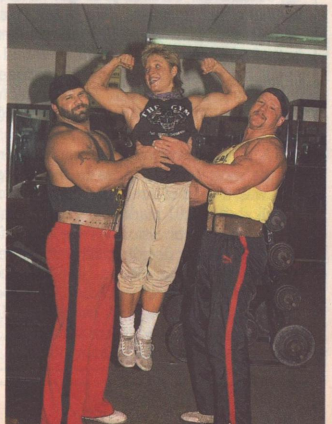
By the age of 17, Animal tired of chasing his own shadow. He convinced a neighborhood friend two years his junior to join his basic training program—a fitness campaign Animal had silently financed with midnight visits through the roof of a local sporting goods store. Before the owners could take inventory, Animal's clandestine raids had amassed several hundred pounds of weights, training gear, jumpropes, and boxing gloves, and he used the contraband to create a gym in the bottom of an abandoned, fire-ravaged apartment building next door to his own.

His friend hardly needed convincing. Hawk had been recently rousted by a local gang, singing a foreboding and all too familiar refrain: *Join us or else.* The boys decided their fates, whatever they were to be, were better off in their own hands than in the self-destructive mitts of local thugs.





Animal uses hand grips as he does a set of 285-pound lat pulls on the Universal (top). Hawk uses a bar to perform the same exercise (above). Lifting Ms. World Joone Hopfenspirger (below) is not part of their daily routine.



LIFT CHART

You, too, can become big and strong like The Road Warriors. Simply follow the training schedule below four times a week. The Warriors recommend four sets of each exercise, eight repetitions per set. Unlike most powerlifters, the Warriors do not stretch or engage in any cardiovascular exercise. "We're in the ring six times a week," Hawk explains. "Beating up geeks is exercise enough."

EXERCISE	HAWK	ANIMAL
Lat Pull	285 lbs	285 lbs
Barbell Shrug	900	950
Barbell Curls	175	185
Dumbell Shrug	200	200
Dumbell Curls	65	65
Bench Press (Max)	585	630
Bench Press (Sets)	480	490
Close Grip Bench	405	405
Squats	800	900
Tricep Pulldown	180	200

He took Benito out with one

(Continued on page 52)

They holed up inside their makeshift headquarters with nothing but their desires, which were powerful, and the vague goals of youth. In air so stale it seemed at times to deny breath, the boys became men. Yet much more was forged between these tumbling walls than bonecrushing muscle. A companionship, a mating of spirited wills, of adolescent needs to adult wants; a friendship transcendent of anything a hostile universe could throw at it created one from two. And the one, emboldened, metamorphasized as it was, reared its head, and took in the world through new eyes.

Animal and Hawk worked their bodies together. They did their roadwork when the wind off Lake Michigan turned their sweat to ice. And they fought together, their fists their only weapons. Hawk recalls a story: "I was getting bigger and stronger, but I was still getting bothered by this same gang. One day they caught me coming back from the store alone.

"The leader was a stringy ex-con named Benito, who was a legend all over the South Side. He killed two cops some years back. Everyone was too scared to death of him—no one would testify against him. He was 26, and to survive in a Chicago gang till you're 26 means two things—you're tough and you're crazy. He was both. Benito says to me, 'Boy, we've about given up on you. Me and the boys are very insulted you'd rather hang out with that muscle-headed geek than with us.'

"I knew I was going to have to fight. The thought of duking it out with Benito scared me half to hell and I also had to worry about the eight other thugs standing around waiting to get a piece of me.

"All of a sudden there's Animal, out of nowhere, and he's pumped. He looks Benito square in the eyes and tells him to just leave it alone. 'Forget it,' he says, 'Just let it rest, Benito.'

"Right away I tell Animal to go away, that this is my battle to win or lose. I figured as long as I was going to get hammered there was no sense in him joining me. Anyway, I'll never forget what he did. He looks at me and says, 'There ain't no more you and me. It's us. You got that?' I just nod at him, but I'm saying to myself this is a new Animal. I had never seen him this worked up before.

"Benito looks at us both and turns to his friends and says how two graves are just as easy to dig as one. Animal doesn't even wait.

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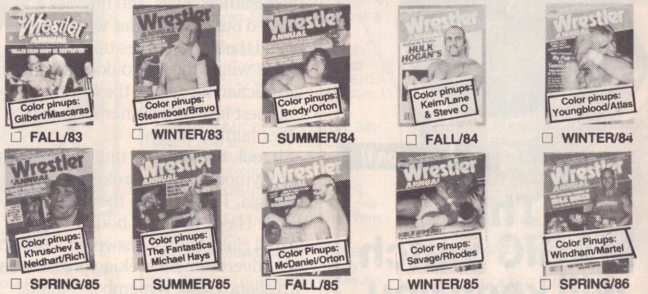

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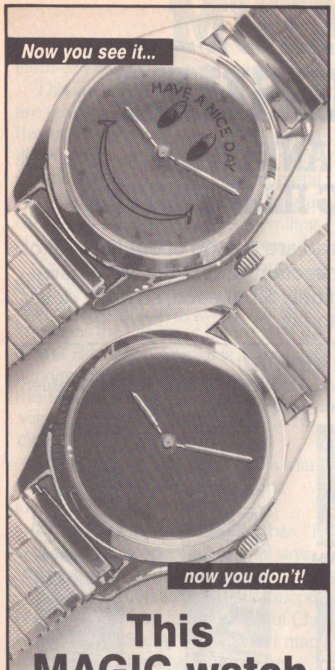

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Animal vs. Hawk

(Continued from page 51)

punch—*one punch*—and went through three more thugs before they knew what hit 'em. By the time I joined in, it was easy pickings.

"When word got out that we had iced Benito, no one bothered us anymore. People knew if you messed with Hawk, then you also messed with Animal and vice versa. And they didn't have to know any more than that."

Despite their growing reputations, neither man desired to make a career out of defending a swatch of meaningless inner-city turf. Convinced that Chicago could offer them nothing but vapid memories, Hawk and Animal packed their leathers, bags, and muscles and headed out of town. But where? Where would their new bodies take them? When would these two doomsayers of destruction face up to the fact their talents best lie in the dismemberment of other human beings?

It took two days, or until their car—a '62 Plymouth Fury—broke down in Georgia. That's where they would stay. While Hawk bounced bodies in a rock 'n' roll club, Animal answered a newspaper advertisement seeking professional wrestlers. Hawk remembers Animal ranting about the easy money. "Imagine," Animal told his friend, talking with bravado, as if he were already the man he would one day become, "getting paid to bang heads. What a breeze."

Instead, it was Animal who stumbled in that night, the recipient of a brutal thrashing at the hands of some preliminary bum barely half his size.

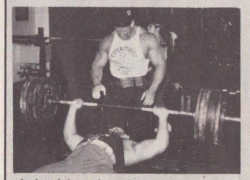
"There's more to this game than I thought," he told Hawk, whose astonishment grew in step with the shiner above Animal's left eye. "These guys don't fight, *they wrestle.* They got all kinds of these weird holds. I think if we're going to do this right we better start training *seriously.*"

Fortunately for the two, in the audience that night, barely able to conceal his excitement, was a frustrated wrestler named Precious Paul Ellering. The inside of the ring offered little satisfaction to Ellering anymore. Although a top contender, he got more of a charge creating strategies than he did from implementing them. As he sat at ringside, watching the primitive Animal plod to victory, Ellering was already mapping out a strategy. As Ellering's career shifted, so shifted the

(Continued on page 54)

THE GYM: THEIR REGION OF DOOM

We know what kind of wrestlers they are, but how would Hawk and Animal fare in the grueling, underpaid sport of competitive powerlifting? According to Dan Stock, assistant manager of The Gym and a part-time strength coach at several local schools, the results would be just as awesome.


Animal bench presses 635.

"Considering that the Warriors are on the road most of the time, what they achieve in the weight room is really remarkable," Stock says. "I have no doubt that if they applied themselves to weight training full-time, they'd not only compete, but they'd dominate."

Hawk took exception to Stock's analysis. "Danny's trying to get us in trouble. I can't say for sure that The Road Warriors would dominate a powerlifting meet. But there is no doubt that we could hold our own. Especially Animal. He is one of the strongest men in the world."

How strong is strong? A look at their weightlifting chart on page 50 indicates that these part-time iron-pushers do all right for themselves.

By way of comparison, Animal's max on the bench press is 635. The world record is 705.5 pounds, set by Ted Arcidi, a recent addition to the WWF's roster. The record Arcidi broke, set previously by Bill Kazmaier, was 661, eclipsing Animal's best by only 26 pounds. "The Road Warriors salute Mr. Arcidi and commend him on his accomplishment," Animal says. "But now that he's wrestling, traveling, and doing promotional work, his training time will be cut in half. Then we'll see how much he can lift."

According to Stock, the Warriors are models of decorum inside The Gym. "We've never had a problem with them," Stock says. "And they are always willing to lend a hand to anyone with a question."

You mean with all those muscular egos floating around, no one has ever taken a swipe at them, just to see if they could squash a Road Warrior?

"We have professionals working out here," Stock answers. "They're interested in their own accomplishments. Hawk and Animal are just two of the guys.

"And besides," he says smiling, "no one is that stupid. They are, after all, the Legion of Doom."

—Eddie Ellner

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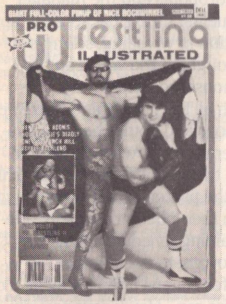

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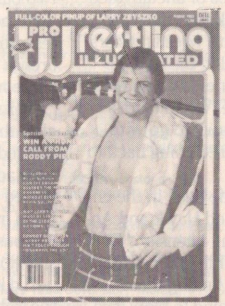

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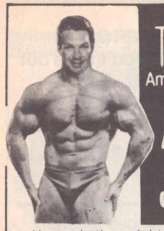

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Animal vs. Hawk

(Continued from page 52)

entire power structure of pro wrestling—it would never be the same.

Ellering, too, had built himself up from a skinny teenager to a world-class powerlifter, a strength freak who deadlifted a world record 745.3 pounds in 1976. Disappointed at the crop of pro wrestlers on the current scene, Ellering had spent the last nine months wrestling in small to mid-sized promotions, scouring America's oilfields, her farmlands, and ghettos for two slabs of uncultivated beef that he might pluck from their circumstances and turn into wrestling stars. While watching Animal in the ring, Ellering swore he would never again question the vagaries of fate. When he discovered there was a Hawk to go with the Animal, he considered going back to church.

Ellering had found the beef. In the ensuing months, he worked Hawk and Animal with an unforgiving intensity. "Everyone gets one shot," Ellering privately told close friends, "and finding these boys is mine. I'm not going to blow it. They won't go to the bathroom without me knowing about it."

Ellering's investment was enormous. All the money he had saved as a wrestler was funneled into the Warriors in the shape of state-of-the-art training facilities, strength coaches, and videotaping. The boys had come a long way since the South Side.

What Ellering couldn't do was restrain Animal, who continued as as a single wrestler for several months. Now Ellering can laugh about those nerve-curling days. "I was terribly disappointed in Animal," he confessed. "I had invested every cent into these boys with the idea that they would become the most devastating *tag team* of all time, and here was Animal taking foolish chances in the ring for no reason."

Whether Animal's solo forays into the ring speeded up Ellering's master plan he won't say, but it wasn't long before The Road Warriors made their debut. Under Ellering's inspired guidance, they quickly captured the National tag team championship and established a reputation for brutality without precedent in professional wrestling.

Although there was success between the ropes, the new triumverate had its share of growing pains. Hawk and Animal had traveled a rocky road together. Their Chicago-bred instincts made it difficult for them to suddenly trust a stranger, an outsider, *a college flunkey* bent on controlling their every habit. Despite the victories, the money and fame, they resented Ellering's sudden intrusion into their lives and rebelled under Ellering's disciplined reign. One night they told Ellering they no longer required his services. Shouts led to blows and the Legion of Doom, as they were now chillingly titled, applied a brutal beating to their manager.

The split was brief, however, and the two sides reconciled within weeks. The two burly dropouts and the manager with the dueling Ph.D.s became the hottest attraction in wrestling, selling out arenas throughout the world on their fierce no-nonsense style.

Through all the hoopla and headlines, after the boos and bottles became supplanted, remarkably, with cheers and accolades, the Warriors remain slavishly rooted to the precepts they brought with them from their ghetto basement: a tenacious training schedule and an unshakable loyalty to one another.

"I'd kill for Animal and I know he'd do the same for me," Hawk says proudly. "That's what makes us so damn tough. There's no jealousy, no envy. We work together for each other."

Never is this more apparent than during a Warriors workout at The Gym. At six in the morning, as the sun peeks over the Northern rim, Hawk and Animal appear without the frills, without makeup, prepared to exercise without boasting of their opponents' destruction. Boasts would make little sense here. Preceding them at the door is Ms. World Joone Hopfenspirger, a muscled beauty whose own training regimen puts the Warriors to shame. After that The Gym becomes a revolving door of sinew and slab: Pete Moen, Mr. USA; Scott Norton, World Arm Wrestling champion; Bob Truax, The Gym's manager and no slouch with a weight belt on himself—the list becomes overrrun with *pectoralis majoris* and *latissimus dorsai.*

Hawk and Animal in the gym is identical to Hawk and Animal in the ring. For seven hours a day, four days a week, they are at arm's length, encouraging, screaming, cajoling and teasing each other into shape, the powerlifter's credo, *No Pain, No Gain,* etched into their brow.

Through dogged loyalty and determination, the Warriors have roared at limitations, mocked the boundaries that define other men. They are like the filaments of an incandescent lamp; they burn fiercely but nothing is destroyed—except their opponents. □

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Randy Savage

(Continued from page 32)

swooping, above-the-rope air raids on opponents took many fans back to the days when a youthful, muscular madman named Jimmy Snuka arrived on these shores. Despite his sadistic bloodlets, Savage was liked by many fans who were attracted to his grunting boasts and day-glo trappings. But most fans watched petrified as Savage swallowed anyone put in the ring with him. He became the cruelest competitor the federation knew in a long while, eclipsing even the standard-bearers of fear and loathing, the vilified duo of Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik.

There was every indication that a Savage-Hogan confrontation would further heat up the summer of '85. Despite his undefeated record, however, Savage was unable to sustain the momentum needed to capture the ranking of number one contender. His victories, although brutal testaments to his skills and ingenuity, were for the most part against opponents with sub-.500 records.

Savage understood the need for sound management, and as the weeks passed without hint of a title shot, he resolved to acquire a business manager to organize his career. Although many men vied for the contract, among them Jimmy Hart, who had previously managed Savage in the Mid-Southern area, Savage shocked the wrestling world by naming Miss Elizabeth, a fetching brunette beauty, as his manager.

A source close to Savage explained the decision. "All the managers Randy spoke to wanted to change his style. Everyone had a different game plan that they guaranteed would win the title for him.

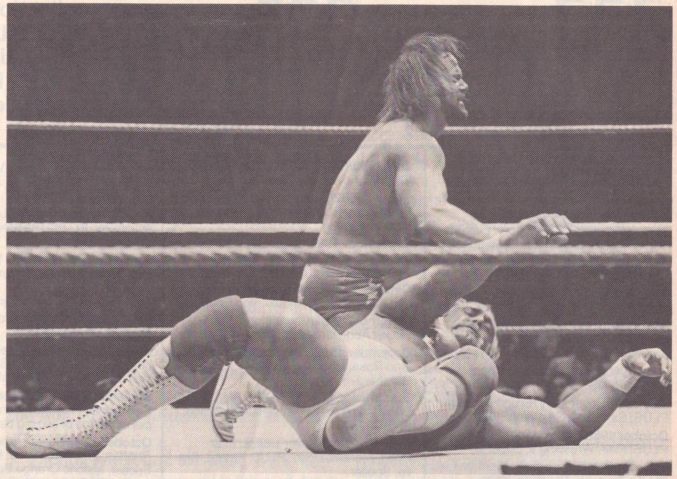
"Randy didn't need anyone to tell him how to beat Hogan. He knew how to beat Hogan. What he needed was someone who could get him a match with Hogan. He admitted he was naive to the way matches were made in New York and he needed someone sharp to do his negotiations.

"At one point Bobby Heenan had the inside track, but talks broke down after Heenan demanded that Savage stop risking injury by climbing the turnbuckle so often. Finally, Savage took a chance. He had no intention of hiring a woman until he met Elizabeth. She possessed a sound business background and carried herself confidently. She also had no interest in changing Savage's wrestling style.

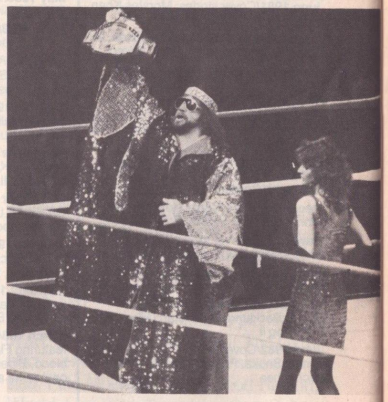
"And face it—would you rather look at Elizabeth every day or Bobby Heenan? Savage and Liz make quite a team. You see them once and you never forget them. Savage wanted to make an impression, and he did. In a big way."

While Elizabeth spent 18-hour workdays on the phone and in front of her IBM PC, Savage enthusiastically attacked his own mat game. Without distractions, Macho Man made Swiss cheese of whomever the WWF would have oppose him, and bulleted to the top of the ratings, supplanting Magnificent Muraco as the number one contender. (Tito Santana, as Intercontinental champion, remained directly behind Hogan in the ratings, but would realistically never be granted a title shot.)

Savage had prepared thoroughly for the Hogan showdown and began to taunt the WWF champion on television and radio talkshows and in newspaper interviews. The heat became too much to bear. Savage had captured the imagination of the country; his grace and brutality, coupled with Elizabeth's innocent, unyielding beauty, divided wrestling fans everywhere.



Hulk Hogan narrowly escapes being pinned by Savage in Madison Square Garden last December (above). Hogan would lose by countout to Savage in consecutive Garden bouts before soundly defeating the Macho Man the month before WrestleMania 2. With Elizabeth at his side, Savage displays the Intercontinental belt to the fans' mixed reaction.



In December, in front of 23,000 wrestling fanatics, Savage presented his manager (and rumored mistress) with an early Christmas present by battering Hogan into a bloody tangle of hair and flesh. Although he didn't capture the title—Hogan was counted out—Savage handed Hogan the most lopsided beating of his career, standing the wrestling world on its cauliflowered ear.

Fans clamored for the rematch, which was immediately signed for the following month, but it is here that the story line becomes hazy and speculative.

At WWF headquarters, there was good reason to toast in the new year with cheer and optimism. 1985 had witnessed the resurgence of professional wrestling, due largely to the innovative and provocative programming adjustments the federation had dared make. Its affiliation with rock music led to the heavily publicized "War To Settle The Score" and "WrestleMania" cards, featuring rock 'n' roll, movie, and other stars of American pop culture. Although many critics condemned the WWF for its blatant exploitation of the discipline, these same pundits glowed inwardly as they watched pro wrestling recapture the network ratings and front page headlines.

1986 promised more growth than ever. The Hogan-Savage feud was proving to be the hottest ticket in wrestling, and preliminary plans were already being made for WrestleMania 2, still four months down the road.

From his own corporate headquarters, in another city, in another state, Bobby Heenan sat bowed in thought. Heenan, too, knew of the impending press release that would alert the world to the arrival of WrestleMania 2. The manager tried every means available to determine who would be wrestling in the main event. What troubled Heenan was that his two big guns, John Studd and King Kong Bundy, might get lost in the Randy Savage shuffle. The Savage-Hogan wars were beyond control, clearly the biggest things to hit the WWF since Hogan had won the belt, and a concerned Heenan, perhaps still smarting at his rejection at the hands of Savage several months back, was determined to break the WWF's infatuation with the Macho Man and his lovely consort.

In their January rematch, Savage defeated Hogan again by countout, creating the stage for a lumberjack return match the following February 17. Rumors floated out of the WWF offices daily, speculating on who the main combatants for WrestleMania 2 would be, although nothing, Heenan was assured, had been finalized.

On February 15, two days before his showdown with Savage, and two weeks before the WrestleMania 2 schedule was to be released, Hogan met Magnificent Muraco in Phoenix, Arizona, for a taping of NBC's *Saturday Night's Main Event*. Managing Muraco this night was Bobby Heenan, filling in for an ailing Mr. Fuji. The match itself was uneventful. Hogan had turned back Muraco a dozen times before and was well on his way toward victory when, suddenly, King Kong Bundy lumbered into the ring and attacked Hogan.

As Heenan shouted encouragement, Bundy squashed Hogan against the turnbuckle and, to the crowd's horror, applied his patented big splash to the fallen champion three times in a row. Hogan was rushed unconscious to the hospital, having suffered from cracked ribs, vertebrae damage, and a concussion. His preliminary condition was listed as serious and he was placed in intensive care.

The rumors that night buzzed like fireflies—the hottest one being the main event of WrestleMania 2 would be a Bundy-Hogan revenge match. Two thousand miles away, Randy Savage tried to ignore the rumors and concentrate on his title match two nights away. He was unable to. Both he and Elizabeth had assumed that regardless of the result of his impending match with Hogan, there would be one final confrontation, the ultimate armageddon that would become the centerpiece of WrestleMania 2. It would be in such a fantastic forum that the entire world would learn of the mastery of the Macho Man and kneel beneath his glorious spectre.

Did Hogan's injuries—which turned out to be nowhere near as serious as the initial diagnosis suggested—create a sluggish Savage? Or was Savage uninspired after hearing the rumors? Did his exclusion from WrestleMania's main event cost him the WWF title? Whichever the case, Hulk Hogan, swathed in bandages, defeated Randy Savage in their lumberjack match, to the mixed emotions of the sellout crowd.

Two weeks later, a press release came to this office trumpeting the three-tiered main event of WrestleMania 2 and, proving the rumors true, Hogan vs. Bundy was announced as the feature match from Los Angeles. Bobby Heenan had played his hand and it turned out to be a full house. Ironically—although this was of little consolation to Savage—there wasn't a full house the night Bundy and Hogan eventually met in the cage in L.A. Revenues from WrestleMania 2 were disappointing in two of the three live sites and in closed-circuit arenas throughout the country. The WWF braintrust can examine the numbers as often as they like, but the facts are unwavering: The gamble had not paid off.

Savage continues to wrestle to packed houses across the country, a claim King Kong Bundy cannot quite make. The Intercontinental champion is cheered as often as he is booed, testimony to his tremendous allure and charisma. In time he will forgive the injustice done to him at WrestleMania 2, but one must wonder if he can ever forget. □

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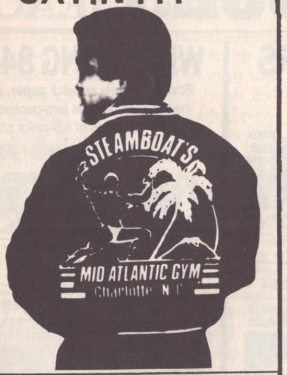

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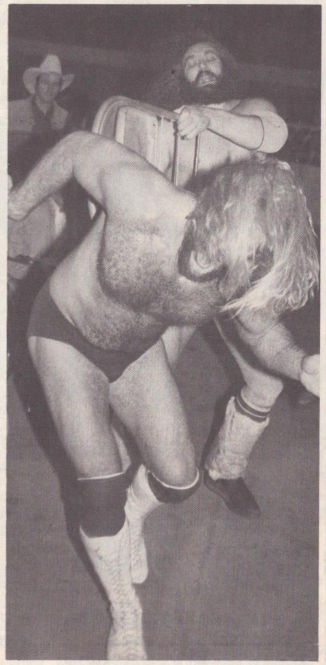
(Continued from page 19)



Brody slams a chair across Michael Hayes' back. Although a gifted technical wrestler, Brody will use any means available to win a match.

BA: So the Bruiser Brody American fans see is really a watered down version?

BB: *Ha, Ahhahah! Ahh!* Tell that to the wives and children of my opponents who no longer have use of their limbs and motor faculties. Who require day nurses and walkers. Whose oatmeal dribbles down their chins at feeding time. *Ahhhhhrgh!* That's funny, Apter. A watered down Bruiser Brody is your worst nightmare.

(Brody clenches a coffee mug in his fist and crumbles it into tiny shards).

BA: Why did you do that?

BB: I don't know. Maybe so I wouldn't do it to your neck. Or to Ellner's skull.

EE: *You must be great at parties.*

BB: I *am* the party, hotshot. Ask anyone around.

EE: *In the fall issue of* Wrestling Superstars, *our staff numerically evaluated the top 100 wrestlers in categories such as offense, defense, power, speed, conditioning, ability to absorb punishment, and stamina. After the numbers were tabulated, the top wrestler in the world, ahead of Hulk Hogan, Stan Hansen and Ric Flair and 96 others, was Bruiser Brody. Are you surprised?*

BB: Surprised? I'm shocked! Stunned that a magazine could conduct a poll that isn't tainted by bias and prejudice. Why do you think I am the highest-paid grappler in the world? It's not my pretty face. I leave the boasting to the Hogans and the Freebirds—I'm not bragging in saying I am the greatest wrestler in the world. No one can measure up to my technical knowledge and body strength. I wouldn't particularly want to climb into a ring with Hansen or David Shultz, because they're crazy, with no regard for their own safety. That's why I like them. They're like me. If I had to, though, I would take them; take them without mercy or regret.

BA: You'd do anything to win, wouldn't you?

BB: If I have to take a man out of the ring to the floor, if I have to hit with a chair, with a chain or a 2x4—I don't care. I'll do it. I'm a winner, I do what I have to do to win. That's the bottom line.

BA: I suppose there's no sense in asking you what's next on your agenda? You pretty much take things one day at a time.

BB: I'm around. I'm here and there. I'm still on The Freebirds' trail. And I got some gigs in the AWA, and the Central States, and, of course, Japan. Also I'm giving a lecture series at a University in late June. Other than that I'm free, the way I like to be.

EE: *If pro wrestling were suddenly abolished, how would Bruiser Brody earn his money?*

BB: There will always be a need for sanctioned violence. Without a vicarious outlet, the population would grow uneasy, restless; ultimately violent themselves. I will never be without work. Right now I could be the personal bodyguard for several well-known Washington politicians and Hollywood stars. They would pay me as much as I make today. Yet, the compromise in personal freedom would be intolerable. Don't worry about Bruiser Brody. Worry about your children instead.

EE: *I'm not married, but I think I get your point. Thanks for joining us today, Brody. Good luck.* □

You Decide

(Continued from page 45)

num T.A. in a recent interview, "but what bothers me is the example it sets for the kids. Now, I know they're in the vast minority, but I've noticed that there are a lot of children out there rooting for these anti-American wrestlers. What kind of values were these kids brought up on? It makes you start to wonder about the future of our country."

To their credit, there's no doubt that the foreign wrestlers are among the best in the world. Nikita and Ivan Koloff are mainstays in this magazine's tag team ratings. The Iron Sheik is a former WWF champion. The Kiwi Sheepherders were able to capture the UWF tag team title. And although the foreign grapplers are generally disliked, Nikita Koloff is the only non-American in this magazine's Most Hated rankings.

"Basically, these guys fill arenas," said one promoter. "I would certainly feel the difference in my pocket if the wrestling commissioners decided to ban anti-American wrestlers. They really get the crowd riled up, and besides, they're tremendously talented. Personally, I feel that most of these guys are all talk."

That possibility does exist. And it's also possible that the quality of the sport would be diminished if these foreign wrestlers are banned. This is certainly a question with many pros and cons, so now we ask you—the fans—to decide whether anti-American wrestlers should be allowed to compete?

Weigh the pros and cons we have established, fill out the ballot below, and return it promptly. Results will be forwarded to the heads of the major wrestling federations, as well as political leaders, and will appear in the Winter issue of *Wrestling 86*. And remember: the fate of this country could be at stake.

ANTI-AMERICAN WRESTLERS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE

- **Freedom.** America was built upon a foundation of free speech. People throughout the country have different and diverse political views, but are they censored? It has not been proven that these anti-American wrestlers are breaking any laws, and if this is the case, their freedom to practice in the field of their choice cannot be infringed upon.
- **Quality.** Nikita and Ivan Koloff. Nikolai Volkoff. The Iron Sheik. Some of the greatest wrestlers in the sport today, and certainly tremendous drawing cards. The quality of wrestling would be greatly diminished if foreigners were banned from the sport.
- **Precedent.** Take a quick look at the NWA, AWA, and WWF ratings on page 64 of this magazine. Ric Flair, Stan Hansen, and Hulk Hogan are not just champions. They're *world* champions. That title certainly would not be appropriate if these foreign wrestlers were banned. Wrestling is a worldwide sport with no boundaries.

ANTI-AMERICAN WRESTLERS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE

- **Money.** An individual puts in a 40-hour week, sweating at the factory to feed his wife and children, and for entertainment takes the family to the wrestling matches. But where does a portion of his money go? Into the pockets of anti-American wrestlers who funnel their earnings into foreign governments.
- **Terrorists.** It has been suspected, but never proven, that some of these foreign wrestlers are spies. If this is true, our national security is at stake. Can the integrity of wrestling bear this responsibility?
- **Bad Examples.** Kids are greatly influenced by what they see. Does a nine-year-old child know the difference between socialism and capitalism? Or why Khadafy's actions toward Americans are bad and President Reagan's actions in El Salvador or Libya are good? Parents wish to expose their children to positive role models and these anti-American wrestlers certainly do not fill the bill. □

TITLES SHOULD CHANGE HANDS ON DISQUALIFICATIONS

The question posed in the Summer 1986 edition of whether or not titles should change hands on disqualifications became even more relevant moments before we went to press when the World Class announced that it was withdrawing from the NWA because of the disqualification rule. Under its independent guidelines, World Class titles will henceforth change hands whenever a champion is beaten—whether by pin, submission, or *by disqualification.*

Overwhelmingly, our respondents agreed with World Class' reasoning. Seventy-six percent of our answering correspondents said that titles should change hands on disqualification and 24 percent said they should not change hands.

"There is always the potential of bad officiating or having a new champion every other night," wrote Jay Elliott Jr. of Las Vegas, Nevada, "but it would also give other more deserving wrestlers their shot at the belt. It might also help the horrible policy situation in the WWF. It would give the real wrestlers in the WWF a long overdue chance at Hogan: Atlas, Putski, Morales, Steamboat, Siva Afi, Brunzell, etc. Sure, it would mean more work for everyone in the business, but it would also benefit the wrestlers by sharpening their skills, abilities, and versatility."

However, Veronica Killian of Murphy, North Carolina, felt differently. "If the title were to change hands on a disqualification, the promoters and magazines would go crazy trying to figure out who the current champion was. A title is something worked hard for and a lot of effort is put into defending it. Maybe soon, the idiots who want to change the disqualification rule will come to their senses and realize that the belt should not be regarded as so trivial a matter."

Some readers, however, saw a compromise to the disqualification situation. Wrote Reginald Seals of Chicago, "The best solution would be a DQ clause. The rule would automatically strip a champion of his title if he intentionally disqualified himself three times within one month."

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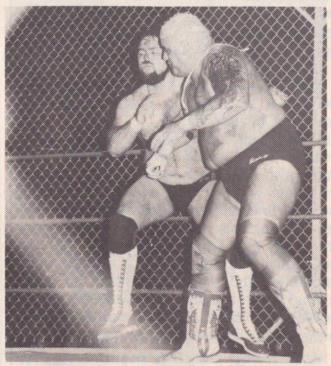
Cage Match

(Continued from page 40)

Carlos Colon is about to win his "war" with The Mongolian Stomper (above). His left shoulder oozing with blood, Dusty Rhodes drives Arn Anderson into the cage with his right shoulder (below).



match takes us back to the mid-1950s and a town in south New Zealand called Dunedin.

In those days, Dunedin wrestling was held in the town hall, and it was common practice there to encircle the ring with a net similar to a tennis net in order to prevent the wrestlers from falling out of the ring onto the ringside spectators.

Longtime Texas promoter Paul Boesch had heard of this practice, and mentioned it to Galveston, Texas, promoter Norman Clark. Galveston being a fishing capital, Clark appropriately decided to encircle the ring with a fishing net. But what was effective with bass and trout was not so effective with professional wrestlers: The net failed to keep the action in the ring.

On March 2, 1956, Boesch took Clark's idea and modified it for a match between Wild Bull Curry and Prince Maiava in the City Auditorium in Houston. Instead of fishing net, he used chicken wire stretched across a makeshift wooden frame. Barbed wire was added at the top of the fence in order to prevent the wrestlers from escaping over the top.

Wrestling's first cage match was, in fact, a *barbed wire* cage match.

Joe Jares' 1974 volume *Whatever Happened To Gorgeous George?* quotes Bull Curry on the match: "It was a wild battle, and after a while we hit one side of the cage so hard we broke through, got cut, and bled so badly they had to stop the match."

And so from the very start, the pace was set for cage match wrestling: Battle like raving lunatics until one or both of the wrestlers is injured so badly, or is so exhausted, or has lost so much blood, that the match cannot continue.

Over the years, the cage match has been modified a bit by some wrestling organizations, and the rules for victory tend to vary. Sometimes the object is not simply to brutalize one's opponent in the extreme, but rather to escape through the cage door or over the top of the cage. But even in these cases, the wrestlers involved usually capitalize upon the opportunity that the cage itself offers: A way to inflict added punishment on one's opponent.

Indeed, many a wrestler has forsaken an easy victory walking through the cage door in favor of further brutalizing his foe. Which makes sense. After all, cage matches are generally the last resort for settling a particularly bitter feud. When such extremes have to be taken, it's unlikely that the combatants will be too concerned with winning or losing.

***

Dusty Rhodes has stepped into the steel cage more times than any active wrestler. His body bears the scars of countless dozens of cage matches held in the United States and around the world. He has wrestled in singles and tag team cage matches, NWA World title cage matches and grudge bouts where pure violence is the order of the day.

"I wouldn't want to wrestle in a cage every day of the week," Rhodes says, "but you have to understand, there comes a time and a place where matters get so out of hand, where emotions run at such a high level, that there's only one way the score can be settled.

"I'll tell you something, and I'm very serious about this. There's a certain feeling I have when I get into the cage. I don't like it. It's like being a criminal in a jail cell, or an animal at the zoo. It strips my humanity away, and it leaves nothing but animal instinct. And when that animal instinct takes over, jack, it's like I'm losing control of myself, and I know for sure that the blood's gonna flow. My blood, my opponent's blood. And no matter how much punishment I take, all I want is for my opponent to be worse off than I am. And believe me, when I'm done with him, he usually is!"

Dusty's sentiments are echoed by several wrestlers throughout the world who have spent more than their fair share of time between steel mesh walls:

● Carlos Colon: "Going into the steel cage is like going to war. No man enjoys war, and I don't enjoy the steel cage, but a soldier gets an adrenaline rush from charging into battle, and that rush makes him feel more alive than ever in his life. When I step into the cage, I think it's the same feeling. I get an adrenaline rush. I feel alive!"

● Ric Flair: "I don't enjoy the way I have to modify my own strategy in a cage match, but I appreciate that there are times when a cage match is the only alternative the sport has to offer. And there *can* be strategy in a cage match, though that strategy is based on violence rather than science. But let's face it, wrestling is a violent sport, and violence can be a science in and of itself. That's how I won my second NWA World title from Harley Race, and that's how any intelligent athlete approaches a cage match."

● Bruiser Brody: "I wrestle on an edge that most men never experience in life, but I cross over that edge and fall into an abyss when I step into a cage. My concentration is on blood, on pain, on destruction. I want to hear the crunch of my opponent's skin on steel as he crashes into the cage wall. I want to hear those walls shake as he comes bouncing off and collapses to the mat. I want to feel my opponent's head skip from one hole in the chain link to the next as I rake his face against the wall. And I want to see the ringside fans splattered in the blood of my foe."

***

Without hesitation, I would have to say that the most incredible moment I have ever witnessed in wrestling was during a cage match.

It was June 1982. Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka was wrestling WWF champion Bob Backlund for the third time in New York's Madison Square Garden. It was late in the match. Backlund was nearly unconscious. Snuka scaled to the top rope, and then *to the top of the cage*. Incredibly, he attempted a flying bodypress! Forget that backlund rolled out of the way. Forget that Snuka lost the match. The memory of that miraculous flight through the air will live forever in my mind, and undoubtedly in the minds of the 20,000-plus fans who were also there.

When you get right down to it, I think that may be the reason why wrestling fans enjoy the sport so much. Because they know that every once in a while, an absolutely miraculous moment will occur.

Indeed, every wrestler, when pushed to the brink of his mental and physical limits, has the capability to do what Snuka did that summer night in '82—burst through those limits and demonstrate an almost superhuman athletic excellence.

And while cage matches offer an unparalleled level of violence, they also offer the unparalleled promise of witnessing one of those miraculous moments. The violence can be ugly, but the exhilaration experienced by fans and wrestlers when such a moment takes place is something wholly unique in the sporting world.

And *that's* the science of violence. □

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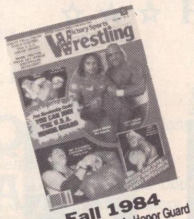

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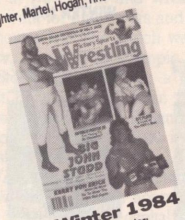

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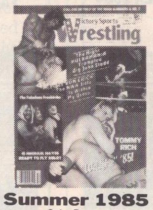

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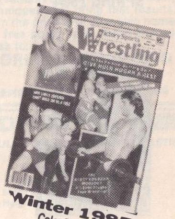

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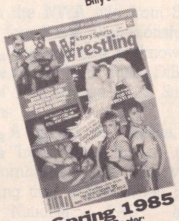

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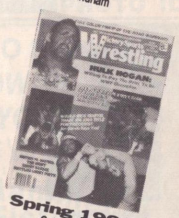

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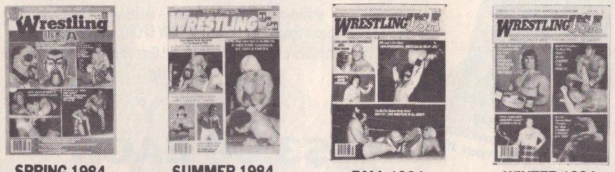

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Feedback

(Continued from page 8)

par, and that's a shame.

Shohei Baba. This giant hasn't received nearly as much coverage as he should. He is a three-time NWA World champion. I'll admit that those three reigns (once from Jack Brisco and twice from Harley Race) totaled do not even equal one month, but the fact remains that he was world champ.

He also has held the Pacific Wrestling Federation title several times. The PWF is the most prestigious title in Japan, and Baba earned it each time. The PWF belt until recently was owned by Stan Hansen, AWA champ, a man who has met defeat at the hands of Baba more than once.

Baba's age may restrict him from being World champ again, but to me he will always be the best Japanese wrestler in history (with Antonio Inoki, Toru Tanaka, Rikidozan, and Mr. Fuji rounding out the top five).

Harley Race. Aahh! I have saved the best for last. Not only is Harley Race my favorite wrestler, but he is my idol! I have patterned not only my wrestling style (yes, I said wrestling style) after him, but my entire lifestyle. The man is the consummate professional, caring little about what people think of him and the way he wrestles, yet caring enough about the sport not to tarnish it with *Tonight Show* appearances or Harley Race coffee mugs.

I remember about three years ago, a young amateur wrestler, a friend of Harley Race's son Justin, was injured. This athlete (Greg Wicina) was told that he would never wrestle again. Race helped organize a card where all the proceeds would go to the Wicina family. Race, Ric Flair, Luke Graham, and Tully Blanchard, among others, appeared on this card, which was very successful. This proves that Harley Race is a man who cares about others.

Remember, Race has not been a rugged wrestler all of his life. Even before he defeated Dory Funk Jr. in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1973 for his first NWA title, even before Race reigned with Larry Hennig as AWA tag team champs, before Harley battled to become the legend that he is, he was a little boy with the hopes and dreams that led him to be what he is today.

Harley Race doesn't often let fans see his human side, but what he did for the Wicina family earned him my everlasting respect.

(The writer is a wrestling fan from Staten Island, New York) □

INFOCENTER

Do you have a wrestling history question? A question about wrestling's current events? How about a technical question regarding the rules of the sport? In each issue, *Wrestling 86's* research department will provide the answers. Send your questions to:

InfoCenter
Box 48
Rockville Centre, NY 11571

Q: Over the last month or so, I've heard all about the big shows in wrestling: WrestleMania 2, Texas Stadium, The Crockett Cup, and WrestleRock. I'm wondering: What are some of the other really big cards that drew a lot of people in the past?—*Barry McGuiger, Detroit*

A: In the years since World War II, some of the sport's biggest crowds have been at Madison Square Garden, particularly during the years 1951-1958 when Antonino Rocca headlined the card. On June 30, 1961, 34,000-plus fans flocked to Chicago's Comiskey Park to see Buddy Rogers capture the NWA World title from Pat O'Connor; that may well have been the largest crowd attendance up to that time. On August 8, 1980, a cage match between Bruno Sammartino and Larry Zbyszko, held at New York's Shea Stadium, drew an announced crowd of 40,995; by contrast, the Bruno-Pedro Morales Shea Stadium card on October 2, 1972, drew 22,508. The first annual David Von Erich Memorial Parade of Champions drew an announced 43,518 to Texas Stadium on May 6, 1984, as Kerry Von Erich captured the NWA World title from Ric Flair—the largest live crowd ever. WrestleMania and WrestleMania 2 were seen by hundreds of thousands of fans, but that takes into account closed circuit broadcasts; the live gates of both those cards failed to set any records.

Q: I'd like to know what happens to the old belts when a new championship belt is made. For example, what about the old NWA World belt held by Ric Flair until this new one was made, or the U.S. belt held by Magnum T.A.?—*Mark Bierfeldt, Buffalo, NY*

A: In the two cases mentioned above, the belts were returned to the NWA main office in Kansas City, and are currently in the care and keeping of NWA President Bob Geigel. In some other cases, such as with the old Georgia National belt (formerly held by Larry Zbyszko, Brad Armstrong, The Spoiler, et. al.), the belt itself is destroyed. In still other cases, as with the original WWF belt, the belt is presented to the man who personified the championship for so long—in the case of the WWF, Bruno Sammartino.

Q: What is the longest wrestling match on record?—*Dave Clemons, Atlanta*

A: Three matches come to mind. In 1880, two wrestlers by the name of William Muldoon and Clarence Whistler met in New York and wrestled a match that went for nine hours and 35 minutes—without a fall! The match was declared a draw. In the 1912 Olympic Games, held in Stockholm, Sweden, a middleweight bout between Max Klein of Russia and Alfred Asikainen of Finland went on for almost 11 hours. In 1920 in Omaha, Nebraska, Ed "Strangler" Lewis wrestled NWA champion Joe Stetcher in a wild brawl that lasted five hours; Stecher spent two weeks in the hospital suffering from extreme exhaustion. Lewis would go on to win the NWA title from Stetcher, his first of four NWA championships, in 1921.

Q: I would like to know something about "Iron" Mike DiBiase, the father of Ted DiBiase.—*Lisa Smollen, New Orleans*

A: A native of Omaha, Nebraska, "Iron" Mike DiBiase grew up in the Cornhusker State and won his first wrestling title in 1946 when he captured the National AAU heavyweight championship while attending the University of Nebraska. In 1947, 1948, and 1949, DiBiase won three successive Big Seven Intercollegiate Conference heavyweight crowns. In one college match, DiBiase wrestled University of Minnesota student Verne Gagne during a dual meet in Lincoln, Nebraska; Gagne won the match. A shoulder injury kept DiBiase out of the 1948 Olympic Games, and he turned to the pro ranks shortly thereafter. His first pro match took place in Lincoln, Nebraska—against his former Cornhusker wrestling coach, Jerry Adams! Dubbed "Iron" Mike because of his rugged ability and vicious determination, DiBiase made a name for himself in first in Nebraska, and later throughout the Midwest and in Texas. DiBiase held several regional titles over the course of his career, and his wildest feuds were with fellow Nebraskans the Dusek brothers, Joe, Ernie, and Emil. He died on July 2, 1969, in Lubbock, Texas. □

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RATINGS

Ratings for the Top 10 and for Tag Teams are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. Most Hated and Most Popular ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices. Other categories are compiled with the assistance of wrestlers, promoters, and reporters, with the number one positions being awarded to the major champion in each regional category as of press time.

TOP10

1—**RIC FLAIR**
NWA World champion

2—**HULK HOGAN**
WWF World champion

3—**STAN HANSEN**
AWA World champion

4—**RANDY SAVAGE**
Intercontinental champion

5—**MAGNUM T.A.**
U.S. champion

6—**RICK RUDE**
World Class champion

7—**DUSTY RHODES**
No. 1 contender: National title

8—**BRUISER BRODY**
No. 1 contender: World Class title

9—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
National champion

10—**KERRY VON ERICH**
No. 2 contender: World Class title

TAG TEAMS

1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
No. 1 contenders: NWA World tag team title

2—**THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**
WWF World tag team champions

3—**THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS**
NWA World tag team champions

4—**SCOTT HALL & CURT HENNIG**
AWA World tag team champions

5—**THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title

6—**THE FANTASTICS**
UWF tag team champions

7—**GREG VALENTINE & BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title

8—**THE FABULOUS FREEBIRDS**
No. 1 contenders: UWF tag team title

9—**IRON SHEIK & NIKOLAI VOLKOFF**
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

10—**MAGNUM T.A. & DUSTY RHODES**
No. 3 contenders: NWA tag team title

NWA

World Champion: **RIC FLAIR** *243, Minneapolis, MN*

1—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

2—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

3—**RICK MORTON**
228, Memphis, TN

4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

5—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec

6—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX

7—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

8—**LEX LUGAR**
280, Chicago, IL

9—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY

10—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL

AWA

World Champion: **STAN HANSEN** *322, Borger, TX*

1—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC

2—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA

3—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA

4—**BRUISER BRODY**
284, Albuquerque, NM

5—**NORD THE BARBARIAN**
316, Bozeman, MT

6—**PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE**
271, Minneapolis, MN

7—**SCOTT HALL**
290, Minneapolis, MN

8—**BRAD RHEINGANS**
248, Appleton, MN

9—**COL. DeBEERS**
248, Cape Town, South Africa

10—**BORIS ZUKHOV**
254, Leningrad, Russia

WWF

World Champion: **HULK HOGAN** *302, Venice Beach, CA*

1—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

2—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

3—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI

4—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX

5—**JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA

6—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

7—**KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ

8—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL

9—**JOHN STUDD**
364, Washington, DC

10—**ADRIAN ADONIS**
303, New York, NY

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

1—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

2—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

3—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

4—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec

5—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL

6—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

7—**SHASKA WHATLEY**
238, El Paso, TX

8—**JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY

9—**MANNY FERNANDEZ**
245, El Paso, TX

10—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
280, Midland, TX

WORLD CLASS

1—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN

2—**BRIAN ADIDAS**
238, Denton, TX

3—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

4—**BRUISER BRODY**
284, Albuquerque, NM

5—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX

6—**LANCE VON ERICH**
260, Dallas, TX

7—**CHRIS ADAMS**
230, Stratford, England

8—**KABUKI**
252, Singapore

9—**ICEMAN PARSONS**
242, St. Louis, MO

10—**STEVE SIMPSON**
230, South Africa

UWF

1—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY

2—**KORTSIA KORCHENKO**
286, Russia

3—**BUZZ SAWYER**
240, St. Petersburg, FL

4—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL

5—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA

6—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB

7—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Tulsa, OK

8—**KOKO B. WARE**
241, Memphis, TN

9—**RICK STEINER**
248, Detroit, MI

10—**BRETT SAWYER**
242, St. Petersburg, FL

RATINGS

For period ended May 23, 1986

FLORIDA

1—**LEX LUGAR**
280, Chicago, IL

2—**THE WHITE NINJA**
231, Japan

3—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX

4—**KENDO NAGASAKI**
248, Singapore

5—**RON BASS**
265, Pampa, TX

6—**BOB ROOP**
273, Tampa, FL

7—**KENDALL WINDHAM**
220, Sweetwater, TX

8—**THE CUBAN ASSASSIN**
236, Cuba

9—**TYREE PRIDE**
231, Haiti

10—**JERRY GREY**
241, Tampa, FL

MID-SOUTHERN

1—**BILL DUNDEE**
214, Melbourne, Australia

2—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN

3—**BUDDY LANDELL**
236, Los Angeles, CA

4—**DUTCH MANTEL**
242, Bucksnorth, TN

5—**JOS LeDUC**
280, Godbout, Quebec

6—**BILLY TRAVIS**
225, Lexington, KY

7—**PAUL DIAMOND**
230, Thunder Bay, Ontario

8—**RIP ROGERS**
238, Atlanta, GA

9—**ABDUL KHADAFY**
265, Libya

10—**HILLBILLY ELMER**
406, Philadelphia, MS

CONTINENTAL

1—**WENDELL COOLEY**
238, Memphis, TN

2—**JERRY STUBBS**
235, Pensacola, FL

3—**EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET**
227, South Wales

4—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
226, Marietta, GA

5—**THE BULLET**
234, parts unknown

6—**MR. WRESTLING II**
247, Atlanta, GA

7—**TOMMY RICH**
232, Hendersonville, TN

8—**ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN

9—**TOM PRITCHARD**
220, Houston, TX

10—**JIMMY GOLDEN**
234, Montgomery, AL

NORTHWEST

1—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
245, Portland, OR

2—**BOBBY JAGGERS**
265, Dunlap, KS

3—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL

4—**MIKE MILLER**
260, Memphis, TN

5—**THE ASSASSIN**
249, parts unknown

6—**BRADY BOONE**
236, Charlotte, NC

7—**SCOTT DORING**
255, Minneapolis, MN

8—**MOONDOG MORETTI**
245, Boise, ID

9—**NICK KINISKI**
241, Vancouver, BC

10—**SHEIK ABUGHDADIEN**
242, parts unknown

MOST POPULAR

1—**HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA

2—**RICK MORTON**
228, Memphis, TN

3—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

5—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

6—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

7—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX

8—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX

9—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY

10—**SCOTT HALL**
290, Minneapolis, MN

MOST HATED

1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN

2—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

3—**JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA

4—**STAN HANSEN**
322, Borger, TX

5—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
276, Moscow, Russia

6—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN

7—**KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ

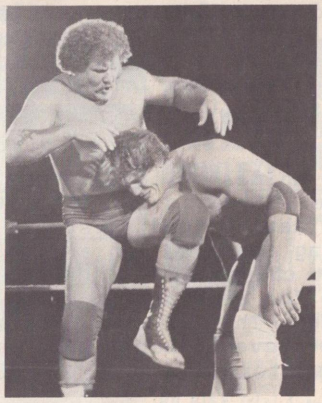
8—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL

9—**SHASKA WHATLEY**
238, El Paso, TX

10—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA

ANALYSIS

Race is yet to be run. The letter posed a sensible question: "*Now that Harley Race is in the WWF,*" writes a fan, "*shouldn't his former postion in the NWA ratings automatically earn him a spot in the WWF ratings?* Although the WWF is remarkably silent about Race's past accomplishments, the facts remain that the 24-year veteran has been one of the most revered and dominant wrestlers in the game. But, as the song goes, what have you done for me lately? As most NWA observers know, Race has slipped in the past few years. And now, with his move to the WWF, he will not be rated until he proves himself worthy. Still, he remains a formidable foe, and if he can defeat most of the WWF hot-shots placed in front of him, he will begin his climb in the WWF ratings. Wrestling is a sport based on current accomplishments, not past achievements. Therefore, for this month at least, Harley Race will be absent from the ratings.



Harley Race: Career lift?

Happy Anniversary. June 29 marks the six-month anniversary of Stan Hansen's title winning triumph over Rick Martel. Should Hansen continue at his relentless championship pace for another half-year, don't be surprised if he unseats Ric Flair as the world's number one wrestler.

Mail: Send all comments and criticisms to Ratings Analysis c/o *Wrestling 86*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY, 11571.

THIS JUST IN . . .

Fans of the Florida mat scene were startled recently when popular favorite Barry Windham came to the rescue of his bitter enemy, Lex Lugar. The sudden about-face occurred before the semifinal round of a tournament to determine the new Florida champion. Barry Windham dropped out after realizing that he and brother Kendall could meet in the finals. That left the threesome of Kendo Nagasaki, Kendall, and Lugar to do battle. Straws were drawn and Kendall received a bye into the final round, leaving Lugar and Nagasaki as opponents in the semifinals. But before the match could begin, Nagasaki attacked Kendall and was quickly joined by Sir Oliver Humperdink, Bob Roop, and the White Ninja. After tossing the younger Windham from the ring, the four men turned their fists on Lugar. Suddenly, from the dressing room, Barry Windham came barreling to the rescue. He cleared the ring of the rulebreakers and then stood several feet away from his most hated foe, Lugar. Each man glared at the other for seconds that dragged like hours. The crowd shifted in nervous anticipation. Windham extended his hand and Lugar grabbed it. To the stunned applause of the audience, the two shook hands and walked together toward the dressing room. Stay tuned for updates on this shocker.

The Second Annual Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup Tournament will take place April 10-11, 1987, at the Baltimore Civic Center, promoter Jim Crockett announced. "The format will be essentially the same, except we are hoping to raise the number of tag teams involved and the amount of prize money," Crockett said, "possibly adding several runner-up cash prizes, as in a tennis or golf tournament. We expect that next year's cup will be even more exciting than this year's."

Billy Jack Haynes has taken to the road again. After defending his Pacific Northwest title in front of his Oregon fans, he'd return with his blind and crippled father to their Oregon home and bask in the Oregon air. He had achieved a peaceful coexistence with his profession and environment. He had returned home to Portland, apparently to stay, and according to one critic, "was wrestling close to perfection." But in the strange, nomadic world of Billy Jack Haynes, peace and contentment are foreign words. After several months back home, Haynes abruptly left Portland, causing stunned officials to vacate his Pacific Northwest title. As of press time, Haynes' whereabouts are unknown.

Road Warriors Hawk and Animal will each receive shots at Ric Flair's NWA World title. "This is unprecedented respect," Legion of Doom manager Paul Ellering told Wrestling 86. "Based solely on their dominance as a tag team, my men are being asked to battle for the World's heavyweight championship." Ellering denied rumors that the team will split up for several months. "Hawk and Animal will never abandon each other. They've been through too much together. However, that will not prevent them from removing the jeweled belt from Flair's waist. A victory for one is a victory for all."

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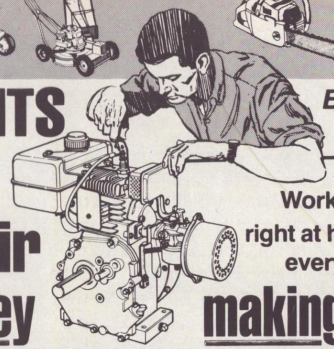

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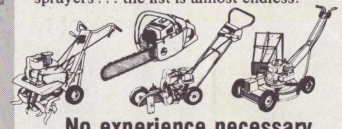

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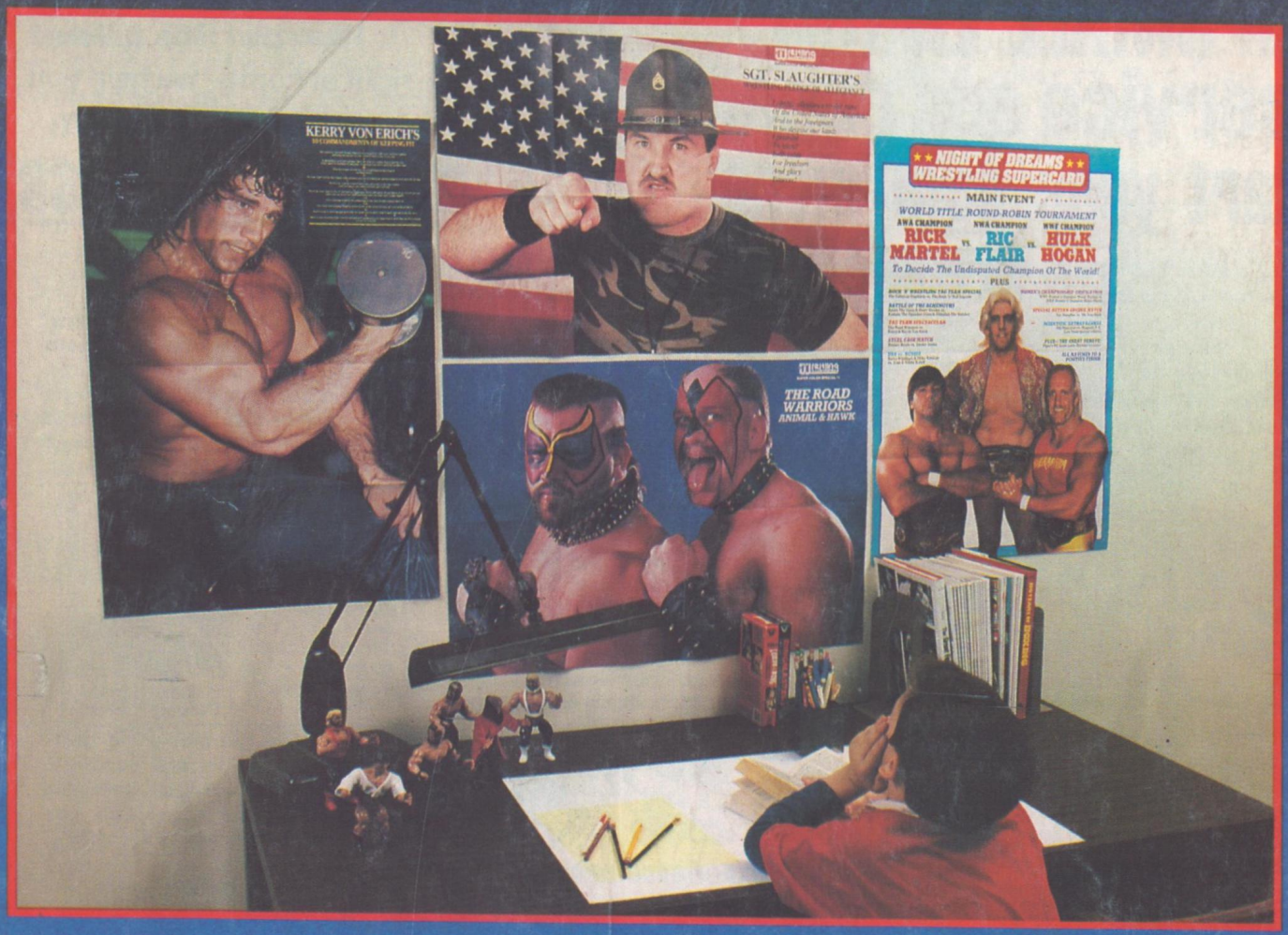
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SGT. SLAUGHTER'S
THE ROAD WARRIORS ANIMAL & HAWK
NIGHT OF DREAMS WRESTLING SUPERCARD
MAIN EVENT
WORLD TITLE ROUND-ROBIN TOURNAMENT
AWA CHAMPION RICK MARTEL VS. NWA CHAMPION RIC FLAIR VS. WWF CHAMPION HULK HOGAN
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